THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1892.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

AN official intimation has been given as to the course which the Government have decided to take with regard to Uganda. It is one which was foreshadowed in these pages some weeks ago. The evacuation of the country by the British East Africa Company will be duly proceeded with; that, at all events, is a step which cannot be delayed. If we are to be committed to a great and costly enterprise in Equatorial Africa, it must not be at the mercy of a company of private adventurers. But before any final decision as to the course which the Government will take has been arrived at, an independent Commissioner representing the Queen, and supported by an adequate native force, will go out to Uganda, not merely to superintend the evacuation, but to inquire on the spot into all the conditions of the problem. This is the wise and sensible solution of the difficulty which has been arrived at by Ministers. It is one all along recommended in these pages, and we believe that it will commend itself to the favour of the country.

LAST Tuesday the daily newspapers amused themselves by presenting to their readers circumstantial reports of the proceedings of the Cabinet Council held on the previous day. Apparently some Cabinet Minister at the bidding of a newspaper reporter had forsworn himself and given all those details, knowledge of which is commonly supposed to be absolutely confined to the Cabinet itself. We need hardly say that the whole story was a fabrication, which had not even the merit of being cleverly devised. The wonder is that respectable news agencies should send forth silly gossip of this kind, and that experienced editors in town and country should think it worth their while to print it. Yet there seems to be somewhere a regular manufactory of lying rumours. The other day, as we have pointed out, the Tory newspapers worked themselves into a state of frenzy over an imaginary intention on the part of the Cabinet to grant a general amnesty to the dynamiters, and even *Punch* was moved to make the tale the subject of its chief cartoon. The story was a sheer invention, so far as any action by the Cabinet was concerned, and, as a moment's thought should have sufficed to convince anybody, was not even *ben trovato*. Newspaper readers must be cautioned against believing the wild statements which are current in certain quarters just now respecting the intentions of Ministers. Above all they may discard at once any pretended revelations of the doings of the Cabinet.

THERE is no pleasing PRINCE BISMARCK. He is very angry indeed with THE SPEAKER and with our esteemed contributor MR. BIGELOW, for a statement concerning something he said to a Russian Minister on the subject of the Czar's treatment of the Poles. It is a lie, he bluntly declares. In most cases when a man denies any observation attributed to him people cheerfully accept his denial. It is PRINCE BISMARCK'S own fault if, even in Germany, there is an indisposition to do this in his case. He has, however, been so successful in teaching his fellow-countrymen the value of a denial of this kind that he must not be surprised at their refusal to believe it. As for Englishmen, we cannot do better than call upon DR. W. H. RUSSELL to tell the world what he thinks of the value of a denial by the ex-Chancellor. He can speak on the subject from personal experience.

MR. GOSCHEN made a speech of his usual bitterness on Thursday at a meeting of a so-called "Unionist Club" in London. Whilst loudly professing his satisfaction at being restored to the bracing air of opposition, he seemed singularly angry at the thought that his opponents no longer enjoyed that advantage. He sneered at MR. ASQUITH, misrepresented the action of ministers with regard to Uganda, and denounced the resolve of the Government to attack the grave abuse of non-resident voters. His strongest epithets were, however, reserved for MR. MORLEY and the Evicted Tenants Commission. In the opinion of MR. GOSCHEN the Irish Secretary has committed a grave offence in appointing a partisan Commission to inquire into such a subject as the state of the evicted tenants. The reply to this charge is a very simple one. MR. MORLEY was careful to choose among the members of the Commission at least one gentleman who was known to be an opponent of the policy of the Government; nor was it MR. MORLEY'S fault that this gentleman, having accepted his appointment, subsequently retired precipitately from the Commission. Besides, does MR. GOSCHEN feel no twinge of shame when he talks about a partisan Commission? Has he forgotten the conference between MR. SMITH and MR. WALTER which preceded the appointment of the Parnell Commission, or the care which the Government of the day took to exclude from that Commission any single person who was not opposed in politics to one of the parties into whose actions it was appointed to inquire?

MR. FOWLER'S Commission on the Poor Law is, we believe, nearly complete. It will be a strong body, though rather larger in numbers than such Commissions usually are. It was, however, necessary to secure the representation upon it of all the interests associated with the question of poor law relief to the aged, and as both political parties have also to be represented (MR. GOSCHEN not having had any part in the appointment of the Commission, at all events), the size of the body is necessarily considerable. We believe that no clergyman will be placed on the Commission. This does not mean that there are not many clergymen who could have given valuable assistance as Commissioners, but only that it would have been impossible to admit the ministers of any one Church without giving some representation to other Churches. But the best men, who would otherwise have served as Commissioners, will be asked to give evidence, and it is hoped that the inquiry will throw much light upon the difficult problem with which it has to deal.

MR. ASQUITH had a hearty reception at the City Liberal Club on Wednesday, when he attended the dinner in honour of MR. R. K. CAUSTON and MR. W. A. MCARTHUR, the two very popular English Liberals who have been appointed Lords of the Treasury in the present Government. In his speech the Home Secretary touched upon the absurd stories with which the Opposition newspapers are filled regarding the intentions and proceedings of Ministers. The "lying spirit," to which

LORD CROSS once made pointed reference, seems again to be abroad. Fortunately, nobody is any the worse for these falsehoods save the simpletons who believe them. MR. ASQUITH made it clear by his remarks that, though Ministers are fully alive to the need for a continuity of policy in foreign affairs, and do not propose to break down international relationships without the fullest reason for doing so, they are not less strongly sensible of the fact that they have been returned to power for the purpose of reversing the domestic policy of their predecessors. Already they have shown their determination to obey the popular wish on this matter, and every week gives the country a fresh opportunity for observing the difference between a Tory and a Liberal Administration. It is not merely in Ireland that a revolutionary change in the *spirit* of the Government has taken place since the present Ministers were installed in office. That change is just as clearly visible at the Home Office and the Local Government Board as it is at Dublin Castle.

THE immigration of destitute foreigners was considered on Wednesday afternoon at Westminster Town Hall by a meeting of delegates of the local authorities of London, and a resolution was passed in favour of subjecting the influx to "restriction and judicious regulation." Granting the premisses which the meeting apparently assumed, the amended conclusion follows logically enough. But we must remind the alarmists that the premisses so far are unproved. "Documents" were referred to, but they are not before the world. Moreover, as MR. LLEWELLYN SMITH and other experts have pointed out, an alien who never comes on the rates, who the moment he arrives sets to work to learn a trade (usually one which is the monopoly of his compatriots), and who at the end of a year or two is himself often an employer of labour, can hardly be called "destitute." As to restriction, moreover, the Local Government Board took steps in that direction two months ago, in connection with the cholera scare.

SOME curious lights have been thrown lately upon the question of the inequality of sentences. Three of the worst scoundrels in London were tried the other day for what was beyond all doubt a most brutal murder. The merciful jury spared their lives, however, and brought in a verdict of manslaughter. Thereupon the judge, emulating the merciful disposition of the jury, gave the two vilest ruffians twenty years' penal servitude each, and the third man fourteen years. Most persons will be of opinion that a life sentence in each case would not have been too severe. Again, in the Isle of Man a drunken and abandoned wretch named COOPER was charged with the murder of his wife. The case in favour of murder was a very strong one, and it was shown not only that the prisoner had been unfaithful to the unfortunate woman, but that he had frequently treated her with great brutality. Yet here again a merciful jury interposed between the culprit and the gallows, and that terrible person the Deemster being also on the side of clemency, let the creature off with a sentence of ten years' penal servitude. By-and-by we shall, no doubt, have to record a conviction at the Assizes of some poor distracted woman for child murder, and the passing of sentence of death upon a prisoner whose crime is as light to darkness when compared with the criminality of the four men who have escaped hanging this week.

THOSE who met the American delegates to the Brussels Conference when passing through London are aware that they had very little expectation that the Conference would lead to anything, and everybody in this country has been convinced for a long time that nothing will be decided there. In all probability the Conference will break up before Christmas, and once more evidence will be afforded of the utter impracticability of bimetallism. In that case it is extremely likely that the United States Government will stop the purchases of silver, and that there will be considerable trouble for a little while afterwards. The most far-seeing are preparing for all this, and many hope that the preparations have been carried so far that the crisis will be less severe than seemed probable a little while ago. Yet there are some who are still sanguine enough to think that the Conference will take some measures to increase the use of silver, and the price accordingly was put up on Wednesday about $\frac{5}{16}$d. per ounce. It fell back, however, $\frac{3}{16}$d. the next day, to 39d. per ounce, and, according to all appearances, it will go lower. While the uncertainty about silver continues there can be no real activity in any department of business, and the Money Market must remain in anxious suspense. It looks now as if the silver difficulty would again lead to exports of gold from New York even before Christmas. Just at present cotton-picking is at its height, and the demand for money for moving the crop, as the Americans say, is large. There ought to be, therefore, activity in the New York money market and high rates. Nevertheless, some gold has been shipped from New York to Europe this week, and it looks as if a considerable amount more would follow. If the exports become large at so unusual a period of the year, the anxieties about silver will be increased, and probably Congress will be induced even before Christmas to suspend the purchases. Meantime, in London the Money Market is sensitive but undecided. Just now the rates of interest and discount are most influenced by the prospect of gold withdrawals from the Bank of England. But behind all their movements is the anxiety respecting silver, and the uneasiness caused by the German Army Bills and the Russian accumulation of gold.

DURING the past two years, while the Stock Markets everywhere else have been either in a state of crisis or a state of paralysis, the Paris Bourse has been confident, and prices have been wonderfully maintained. Even the failure of the Russian loan last year had only a temporary effect. But now the Paris Bourse has become quite sensitive, and it looks as if a period of trouble were approaching. The immediate cause is the fears excited by the Panama inquiry and the prosecution of M. DE LESSEPS and his colleagues. The disturbing influence of these apprehensions is all the greater because of the German Army Bills, and because also of the disquieting news from Russia, where another famine seems to be impending, and where, in spite of the official denials that the export of grain is to be prohibited, everybody seems to be expecting that measure. Further, a breakdown in Spain seems inevitable. It is estimated that French investors own not far short of 180 millions sterling worth of Spanish securities, including, of course, industrial securities, like railway bonds and shares; and it seems now as if the Spanish Government would have to declare itself bankrupt, like its neighbour of Portugal, and that the Bank of Spain would have to suspend cashing its notes. An attempt is to be made, it is true, to raise a great loan of 28 millions sterling, but nobody believes that it can be done, and without it it is impossible that either the Bank or the Government can pay their way. In every direction, then, there are difficulties of the gravest kind confronting the bankers and speculators of Paris, and it is little wonder that they should be depressed and should be selling upon a great scale. Here at home, bad trade, the cotton lock-out, and other labour disputes, and the difficulties of our farmers, all weigh upon markets, while, of course, every day the shadow of the silver crisis is deepening. In the United States the fear of a sweeping reduction of Customs tariffs, a change in the banking system, and a silver breakdown, are stopping all kinds of enterprise.

ANOTHER STEP IN ADVANCE.

IT might be supposed, from the fashion in which the Tory journals have discussed the proceedings of the London County Council this week, and the iniquities of the Progressive members of that body, that no such thing as municipal socialism had been tried in England before Lord Rosebery and his colleagues first set the example. One can hardly believe, for instance, that the writer in the *Times* who on Wednesday morning lashed himself into a state of simulated fury over the proposed constitution of a Works Committee by the Council, has ever heard of the existence of the great municipal corporations of the Midlands and the North of England. If he had done so he would scarcely have cared to make so egregious an exhibition of his own ignorance. London, after all, is merely advancing slowly and tentatively in the steps of the other great cities which possess the right of self-government; and, to anyone who knows how the affairs of Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds are managed, the fuss and pother of these cockney critics over the doings of the London County Council must seem infinitely ridiculous. We are by no means all-round advocates of what are clumsily known as Collectivist views, and more than once we have fallen under the ban of the young lions of the Fabian Society because of our failure to agree with them. But we confess that nothing amazes us more than the unreasoning panic which seems to take possession of certain classes in London whenever they see the great Council of the metropolis attempting to do that which has been done safely, and with no small benefit to the public, by smaller but by no means unimportant municipalities elsewhere.

If the proposal that has alarmed the critics of the County Council had been made in any of the great towns of the North, it might have been approved, or not; but it would at least have been discussed calmly and sensibly, and not a single human being would have raised the bogey of Socialism in the course of the discussion. Surely even the *Times* might know that a nation which builds its own ships and repairs them in its own dockyards has got beyond the point at which the proposal to grant a municipality power, if it should see fit, to carry out certain works of construction by its own staff instead of through the medium of a contractor, is likely to alarm it. As a matter of fact, the municipalities in many towns have long since gone beyond the point which has now been reached by the London County Council, and it will be a good thing for the people of London if that body should continue to advance upon its present line, and to undertake the functions which the great provincial corporations now discharge. In such a case the London markets would belong to the London people, and no duke or capitalist, or private body, would be allowed to have any share in controlling the food supply of the community. Our water supply would be freed from the greedy grasp of vested interests; gas and electricity would be manufactured and supplied by the Council, and the profits arising from this great branch of industry would go to the whole body of consumers. Public baths and public laundries would be universal, and in a thousand ways the inhabitants of the metropolis would be permitted to realise the benefits of self-government. It is only one step in the direction of the desired goal which the County Council took this week, but for taking it general commendation, not condemnation, should be bestowed upon it.

Of course, the powers which the County Council thus seek to acquire may be abused. What kind of power is it which is not capable of being abused? But where is any possible abuse of the kind hinted at by the *Times* and the other enemies of reform more likely to be quickly rectified than where it is a public representative body which is guilty of transgressing? It seems to us that these foolish people who are trying to create a scare about Socialism, "pandering to the mob" and so forth, forget that, after all, the control of the County Council does not rest in the hands of any party, or any clique, but in that of the public at large. Water cannot rise above its own level; and if it should ever come to pass that the County Council goes too far for general public opinion, it will be speedily checked in its career. True, there may be times when the public mind may be in a state of panic, and steps which cannot be justified by the voice of wisdom may meet for the moment with popular approval. Such steps are, as a rule, in the direction not of action, but of reaction. But whether it move forwards or backwards under some unreasoning and temporary impulse of popular opinion, the Council will even then be subject to the law of the land, which will know how to protect the rights both of individuals and of the whole community if those rights should ever be treated with injustice by a governing body like the County Council. We commend this idea to the panic-mongers of to-day. For our part we rejoice to see the County Council moving steadily forwards, not towards an impossible millennium, but towards the goal which other municipalities have already reached, and which every wise social reformer must wish to see attained in London also.

THE REFORM OF THE POOR LAW.

THERE are many signs that a revision of the Poor Law cannot be much longer put off. The Poor Law Amendment Act was in its time an excellent, probably a necessary, measure. In many parishes the agricultural labourer habitually lived on the rates; there was a real danger that this would become universal; and in averting this the Poor Law Commissioners did useful, though unpopular, work. We grudge no fair praise to what has been called "the masterpiece of Whig administrative wisdom" in denying that it is perfect, or that it is altogether suited to our present needs. Two of the fundamental axioms of Sir Edwin Chadwick, Mr. Nassau Senior, and other champions of the Act, were that outdoor relief would soon cease to be necessary, and that destitution was only to a small extent ascribable to causes over which the poor had no control. Both assumptions are far from true. There is no sign of outdoor relief being abandoned. Analysing the information contained in the annual report of the Local Government Board as to the recipients of outdoor relief, it will be found that many of them—sick, aged, impotent, etc.—must continue to get outdoor relief. As to London, Mr. Booth has demonstrated that no inconsiderable number of people are, from no fault of their own, unable to maintain themselves in old age. Mr. Booth's figures have been confirmed by inquirers in rural parts; for example, Mr. E. de M. Rudolf, who stated the other day at a conference at Lambeth Palace that, in reply to inquiries addressed to the chaplains of rural unions, he was informed that, in fifty-one unions, out of 11,745 indoor paupers over sixty years of age no fewer than 3,961 were deserving of a different fate. Mr. Fowler has, by reissuing Mr. Chamberlain's circular-note to the Guardians, drawn attention to the expediency of making use of their powers to give employment on special works undertaken to meet exceptional distress, and he has given sensible advice as to the mode in which they should set about such works. No one, however, knows better than he that

his circular will not in some unions be acted upon, that in others it will be misconstrued, and that the outcome will be setting here and there a few labourers to do work which they and all concerned know to be useless. Lange has well said that one of the most mischievous fallacies in regard to social questions is the assumption that there must be a solution of them, while, in fact, very often none is possible. The present difficulty as to the unemployed may in degree exist as long as unskilled labour is rife and trade is unsettled. What we refuse to admit is that nothing further can be done than letting Guardians in their wisdom, or their folly, set men to "spade husbandry on sewage-farms, laying out of open spaces, recreation grounds, new cemeteries or disused burial grounds, cleansing of streets not usually undertaken by local authorities." A little more system and foresight are possible. Distress comes unexpectedly and suddenly; but often the purposes to which unskilled labour out of employment might be turned might be foreseen, and relief works, instead of being hurriedly directed to almost useless objects, might be made of lasting benefit to the community. Suppose that each local authority had pigeon-holed a plan carefully thought out for some much needed local improvement —say, the excavation of a dock or the draining of a marsh; suppose that our local authorities did much as the Intelligence Departments of War Offices, which have ready plans for campaigns not begun, there would be much more show for relief works than there is.

The Government have decided to issue a Royal Commission to inquire into the best mode of uniting an old-age pension scheme with the present Poor Law, and we may be confident that the Commission will recommend in some form a pension system. About three-quarters of a million persons get outdoor relief in England and Wales; and what is this in the case of many of them but a payment of pensions in unsystematic fashion? In the field are half a dozen schemes, not one of which has gained general adhesion. But so far as the discussion has yet gone no fundamental objection has been disclosed. The defect of the present Poor Law is that its merits are negative. It saved us in all probability from the prevalence in many parishes of rates of 15s. to 20s. in the pound. But it has done nothing to diminish sensibly the permanent army of pauperism, always several hundred thousand strong. Reading some volumes of the reports of the Local Government Board, and in particular the practical remarks of the Poor Law Inspectors, we are struck with the monotony of the story—the same wearisome and hopeless reiteration of the fact that about seven hundred thousand paupers are always with us, and are likely to remain. Can nothing be done to disband this army? Can we get from a Royal Commission no light on this problem? In no very hopeful spirit we suggest that perhaps it is not insoluble. Outside the administration of the Poor Law much good work is being done: people on the verge of pauperism are saved from it by many private societies and by individual workers, who act not according to hard and fast rules, but by studying the peculiarities of each case—aiding this person with a loan, taking out of pawn the tools of another, giving a mangle or a hand-cart to one who has lived honestly and industriously, and paying off the back rent of someone who is in arrears by reason of bad health. Why should not this work be, as fortunately in some parishes it is, brought into closer relationship with the administration of the Poor Law? The reluctance to vest larger discretion in the hands of some of the present Guardians is intelligible. But if there were, especially in rural parts, a better class of Guardians—in particular, if they were leavened by the presence of a considerable number of women of leisure, education, and kindliness—they might be safely authorised to do things far outside the lines of Poor Law orders. Never before was there so much private charity, much of it, we take leave to say, well and wisely administered. Never was it so completely severed from the relief given under the Poor Law, and this divorce is not good.

In regard to a kindred matter something may have to be done very soon. The newspapers in agricultural parts are full of references to the "agricultural crisis," and at the coming Conference in London we shall be certain to hear much about the pressure of the rates on the unfortunate farmer and landlord. Writing of one district, a well-informed correspondent says, "The farmers are very depressed, and many of them don't know where to turn for wages and rent." Altogether the outlook is bad, and in some counties action cannot be long delayed. The Taxation Committee of the London County Council has reported that "it is imperative that the relief of the occupying ratepayers of London from the increase of charge should be secured in the next Session by the provision of some new service of revenue, such as, by way of illustration, a municipal death duty, rent duty, or special rate on ground values." Similar demands will be made by farmers, on whom, whatever may be said as to the exact incidence of existing rates, the weight of additional local taxation will be sure to fall. For nearly sixty years the present Poor Law has given us, if not peace, a respite from the consideration of questions which sorely troubled our forefathers. That respite is about to end.

AGENCY IN ELECTION LAW.

TADPOLE and Taper — estimable but limited beings — look upon election petitions much as they look upon corrupt practices: each is a way of winning seats. From this point of view Manchester was a failure and Walsall a success, and nothing more need be said about either. But the reflective person who is known in America as a mugwump and in England as a philosophical politician will naturally have much more to think and say about the present series of petitions. Are we as a nation preserving our "moral continuity" with the old-world cathedral cities as well as with that pious slave-trader, Sir John Hawkins? The mugwump is a pessimist, who has no scope in his own country, and he tells us all about the sins of Tammany and Senator Quay. The philosophical politician is an evolutionist, who may become a Cabinet Minister, and he tells us all about the Ballot and the Corrupt Practices Act. But it may be doubted whether we are really so pure as we say we are, and whether our machinery for preventing and punishing corruption is as effective as it is complicated. The law which unseated Mr. James because he paid for hat cards, but said nothing about the free drinks which were so plentiful, may be ingenious, but is not perfect.

The weak point of the whole system is the theory of agency which still controls the election law. According to the old notion an election was a contest between two gentlemen who sought a position of some advantage, who were ready to pay for it, and for whom no sane man would be willing to work unless he was paid. The Committees of the House of Commons (endeavouring to correct the abuses consequent on this theory) had before 1868 so extended it as to make the required proof of agency very slight, and to make the degree of responsibility greater than anything known between principal and agent at Common Law. As they

seldom gave their reasons, they could do much as they liked. The Judges, when the duty of hearing petitions was transferred to them, had to do their best to extract a principle from many conflicting decisions, though, as Mr. Justice Blackburn said in the Bridgwater case, "it has never yet been distinctly and precisely defined what degree of evidence is required to establish such a relation between the sitting member and the person guilty of corruption as should constitute agency." Even Sir Henry James, strong-handed reformer as he was in 1883, did not try to touch the doctrine of election agency. It remains undefined. A mere canvasser is often not an agent, but a canvasser who is seen arm in arm with the candidate is. The one thing which can be said with certainty is that the election agent is nothing like the agent of commerce as he is known in the City or in the Law Courts. But the tendency of the Judges has perhaps been to assimilate these two dissimilar beings. The evidence of agency which is now required is greater than that which sometimes satisfied the committees. And the Corrupt Practices Act has incidentally increased the difficulty of obtaining evidence. The number of paid workers about whose agency there is no doubt has been greatly decreased, and as a rule duly appointed agents and sub-agents keep themselves and their candidate clear of those who may be expected to do dirty work on his behalf. The very severity of the possible penalties, by frightening the candidate away from dangerous people, gives the dangerous people a freer hand. It is true that those who break the law risk the penalties, but the criminal law has seldom been found an effectual safeguard against corruption. The one really useful check is the fear of voiding the election, and of that there is less fear than ever so far as outside persons are concerned. Of course an election can be voided by general corruption, without proof of agency, but evidence going to this extent can very seldom be obtained. The allegation of general corruption (which we presume was intended by the blundering phrase in the Manchester petition) is usually inserted in the hope that some of the cases proved under that head may afterwards be connected with the candidate on cross-examination of the candidate's witnesses. In effect it remains true that the petitioner must prove agency, and agency is increasingly difficult to prove.

The time has come to consider whether a corrupt practice proved to have affected the result of an election even by removing a single vote from one side to the other should not void the election without proof of agency. It is no longer the concern of only A and B, the candidates, whether A or B is elected. A large and constantly increasing part of the nation are active political workers, and they work not for A or B but for the principles or interests which A or B represents. The old cases speak of a bonâ-fide committee of volunteers, as if it were something peculiarly admirable for any man to work in an election without being somehow connected with the candidates. Nowadays intelligent men recognise that the success of one or other of the contending parties means much more to them than either A or B could give them, and no man recognises this fact more thoroughly than the publican. The interests of the nation require that individuals or associations working for the success of a candidate should be as strictly tied down as the candidate himself. The only real deterrent against such persons is the fear that they may fail to compass their end. Publicans will go on treating until they find that treating will void the election, and injure the anti-temperance candidate without any proof of agency. It may be suggested that a candidate who was unseated on account of the acts of irresponsible persons would be hardly dealt with. But this, of course, would be his only loss. He would be subjected to no actual punishment. A seat in Parliament is not a personal prize. The nation is hardly dealt with if men can be returned to Parliament partly through the corruption even of their most irresponsible supporters. And as a matter of fact the candidate could check the irresponsible persons if it was to his interest to do so. He, too, often merely shuts his eyes and looks virtuous.

THE ENGLISH WAY.

THERE is one way of looking at a good deal that has been going on here for the past week or two, touching social and economic questions, from which sensible Englishmen of all parties may derive some satisfaction. True, the satisfaction in question would be self-satisfaction; but it may be pardonable sometimes to contemplate ourselves with a little complacency, and as the quality we propose to admire is on the amiable side of the line the consideration of it at least can do us no harm. What we speak of is the good-tempered, give-and-take, steady-going, common-sense, practical, and splendidly unlogical manner in which we thrash out burning questions which are the cause of dynamite elsewhere, and bungle our way into results which other nations will not attain till long after us, and then only by the blood-stained road of revolution. It is one of our oldest qualities, this way of working, which has stood us in good stead at many a crisis when the world at large seemed whirling onward to "red ruin and the breaking up of laws," and it is good to see that in the present great evolutionary epoch it does not seem likely to desert us. No discerning foreigner, with a mind unridden by logic and fads, could contemplate without envy, say, such spectacles as might be witnessed in England within the past week or two: Mr. Tom Mann giving his evidence before the Duke of Devonshire's Labour Commission, Sir John Gorst swapping nostrums with Mr. Mann, the London County Council cautiously and prosaically trying an experiment in municipal collectivism, the old City Corporation revolting from the law's expenses and delays and providing a rough and ready court of cheap justice in its Chamber of Arbitration, bishops meeting at Lambeth to improve upon the Poor Law, Social Democratic deputations clamouring for "municipal workshops" and getting sobered by the criticism even of Social Democrats, and withal a Liberal Government in power steadily extending popular liberties by its administration, and preparing by well-considered schemes of legislation to make the bounds of freedom broader yet. Such is the prospect. Examine it and you will find beneath its surface all the ideas, the sentiments, the appetites, the passions which form the yeast of what is known as the "Social Revolution," that revolution which is about to change the aspect of civilisation here as everywhere that human society exists. But how much is there in the prospect besides! what sane, all but imperceptible, leaven which leaveneth the mass and which will enable us to accomplish our transformation without Tom Mann having to send the Duke of Devonshire to the guillotine, or Sir John Gorst and Mr. Sidney Webb having to lead a mob of Fabians to death or glory on a barricade!

One has only to realise the nature of the ideas, or rather the aspirations, which so strongly prevail in order to see how far they might carry us if Englishmen did not commonly translate their ideas into action by a process somewhat more complex and reasonable than that of doctrinaire logic. Mr. Mann's

evidence was luckily remarkable rather for the reservations with which his practical temper compelled him to qualify his suggestions than for the suggestions themselves. In fact Mr. Mann, whether he knows it or not, is simply a sound Liberal. All his aspirations, every one of them, are the aspirations of Liberalism, and when it comes to action with him his common-sense will lead him straight into the Liberal line. Meanwhile his suggestions, the result of the honest strivings for a ready remedy of an inexperienced and imperfectly informed though sound intelligence, are of the crudest. The deputation of the Social Democratic Federation formulated them with a bolder logic the other day when they demanded "municipal workshops." That is what Mr. Mann's idea of dealing with the unemployed would in practice come to. Now it is worth while considering for a moment this expedient of municipal workshops. It is the first time it has ever been so definitely put to an English Government; but it is nevertheless an old idea, having its root in that very proper principle which all courageous thinkers hold in common: that every man willing to work has the right to get work, and that it is the duty of society, if it can, to provide him with it: the *droit au travail*, in short. In France in 1848 this drama of State workshops was fully played out. The proletariat, tired of watching the difficulties of giving effect in practice to the theoretical *droit au travail*, flatly demanded "national workshops," and as their demand was urged, not by a peaceful deputation, but by a mob whose spokesman punctuated his sentences by strokes on the floor of the Hôtel de Ville with the butt of his gun, the Government yielded, and M. Louis Blanc drew up the following decree, which his colleagues there and then signed and issued:—"The Provisional Government of the French Republic engages to guarantee the existence of the workman by labour; it engages to guarantee work to all its citizens." The only way the Provisional Government could think of carrying out this benevolent guarantee was by setting up the "national workshops;" which it did, and the result Social Democrats may find instructive. Not only did the genuine unemployed apply for work, but men went out on strike for higher wages and insisted on the Government giving them employment at the wages for which they struck. Added to these were the army of loafers and spongers to whose existence in every department of labour Mr. Mann has more than once made feeling reference. In a short time over 100,000 men were clamouring for the wages of the national workshops, and the distracted Government could only find work for 12,000 at one time, although, having run through all Mr. Mann's resources of street-repairing and sewer-cleaning, it set them at mere unproductive work in the Champ de Mars. Disappointment and anarchy of course followed, and the Government had to fall back upon the bayonets of the National Guard. The end of the chapter was four days' street fighting and a deluge of blood, out of which emerged a republic from which the country asked nothing but to maintain order. We are sure not Mr. Mann, nor even the Social Democrats, want to see us run through such a chapter as that, though if some of their ideas were carried on their logical course that is how they would travel.

The thing which has saved us in this country hitherto from the violent mistakes of other peoples, the thing which has enabled us to work out our evolution almost without shock, is our constitutional aversion to doctrinairism, which is itself a result of the plain broad strength and the tolerant temper of the English mind. That quality we feel sure will stand to us in the future. But we must be on our guard. The doctrinaire is always with us, and in the new order of things he is likely to demand more attention than we have heretofore been inclined to give him. Systems change, but the doctrinaires remain. There are as many pedants and faddists in the new Socialism as there were in the old individualism. The same type of man who in a previous era would preach *laissez-faire* with the rigidity of a German theologian, is to-day, with equal dogmatism and intolerance, laying down the law according to the gospel of Marx and Lassalle. It is against such as he the democracy of the future must put forth all its common-sense. He it is who would upset the train of progress if the carriage containing his particular nostrum were not run ahead of all the others; he it is who gives life to reaction. The Liberal party is the natural refuge for the democracy from both the doctrinaires and the reactionaries. It carries within it all their aspirations, and is the only instrument by which they can be wrought into realisation; it is the engine and train of progress itself. The democratic masses of England have always perceived this fact, and thus have we ever moved on from precedent to precedent, the public safety never jeopardised, and the national health but growing stronger with every expansion of popular freedom. In the great era on which we have begun to enter, when the emancipation and regeneration of the worker is the ideal before men's minds, it will be seen that the same sober but inspiring story will be repeated. The Liberal party in the van of progress will instal the toiler in his inheritance by wholesome English means, without going either to Germany or to France for its ideas or its methods.

THE BRUSSELS CONFERENCE.

THE International Monetary Conference which met at Brussels on Tuesday has wider scope than any of the monetary conferences called recently, yet it is in the highest degree unlikely that it will have any practical result. It has been brought together at the instance of the United States Government, in concert, it is said, with Mr. Goschen, and the object is stated to be to find a means, if possible, for extending the use of silver. The phrase is very vague, and may mean anything or nothing; and the Belgian Minister of Finance who welcomed the members of the Conference in the name of his Government seized upon that as an omen of great promise. The Conference of 1881, he said, had to consider the feasibility of bimetallism; the present Conference is not tied down to any particular plan. From this it would seem that even the Belgian Government has now given up bimetallism as practicable. But it hopes that something may be done to increase the use of silver; what that something is nobody knows, and everyone, as the Belgian Finance Minister frankly admitted, looks to the delegates from the United States for a suggestion. The United States Government and the Governments of the Latin union—that is to say, France, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, and Greece—likewise the Governments of India, Spain, Portugal, and, perhaps, some others, would gladly welcome bimetallism. They all hold immense masses of silver which they would gladly see raised in value by any means that is possible. But then the question arises—What is possible? In attempting an answer it is to be recollected that neither the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria-Hungary, nor Russia are themselves directly interested. We are interested because of India, but, directly, our concern

in the matter is small. We have a good scientific monetary system; we have the strongest inducements of every kind to maintain it, and it is not to be thought of for a moment that we should change it. Germany took advantage of the French war indemnity to demonetise silver and buy gold, and it is extremely unlikely that she will undo now what she did at so much cost and with so much difficulty. Austria-Hungary has for years been considering the question of resumption. The other day, after mature deliberation, it decided to resume in gold. It has worked out all its plans, it has passed the necessary laws, and it is now only waiting for an opportunity to borrow the requisite amount of gold. It will hardly give up the decision arrived at after such mature consideration. Lastly, Russia has for years been shaping all its financial arrangements for the purpose of accumulating a vast amount of gold. It holds now nearly 100 millions sterling in the metal, and it has announced officially that whenever the time comes for resuming specie payments resumption will be in gold and not in silver. Is it in the least likely that the Russian Government will change its policy out of deference to anything either the United States or the Latin union can say in the Conference? But if neither the United Kingdom, nor Germany, nor Austria-Hungary, nor Russia will agree to make silver legal tender how is it possible that the Conference can have any practical result?

The Belgian Finance Minister on Tuesday expatiated at length upon the importance of the question which the Conference had met to discuss. It was natural that, speaking as a host to guests, he should use language of the kind, and it may be fairly admitted that the question is of considerable importance. But it has not the immense influence upon the prosperity of the world which M. Beernaert alleged. At the same time it, of course, is true that it would be well to arrange monetary questions, if they admit of being settled, by a conference. M. Beernaert went on to say that the characteristic of the present century is to settle by agreement more and more of the international questions that arise from time to time; and then went on to ask why there should not be an universal agreement about money. The answer is very simple; it is impossible. Concert amongst nations is very desirable. But that international concert may strengthen and may grow it is essential that nations should not attempt to do the impossible; and it is certain that they cannot give an artificial value to silver any more than to any other metal, such as copper or iron. The value of everything is determined by the demand and supply, limited in the last resort by the cost of production, and, whatever Governments may decide, those natural influences will override their decisions in the long run. Of course Governments may create a temporary demand, just as any great combination of speculators can create a temporary demand, either for Stock Exchange securities or for commodities; and the price may be run up and may be kept up for a time, longer or shorter according to the number of Governments that enter into the combination. But Governments are not almighty any more than speculators. If a people should insist upon dealing only in gold all the agreements in the world will not prevent them from doing so. And similarly, if the cost of raising gold in the quantities required by the world increases, while the cost of raising silver decreases, no amount of international agreements will prevent gold from rising in value and silver from falling. If an agreement of the kind suggested could be carried it would be immediately followed by a wild speculation in silver, vastly greater than the speculation that accompanied the American Act of 1890. The speculation, of course, would break down after a while, and we should have losses and crises like those which followed the American speculation.

There is one other point to be considered. Assuming that an international agreement for, in some way or other, extending the use of silver could be come to and could be enforced, it is out of the question that it could be made permanent. It would have to be a temporary agreement—that is to say, it would have to be either renewable after a term of years, or, at all events, to be subject to revision. If so, what is to prevent any Government withdrawing from the agreement at the end of the term of years? We all know that the commercial treaties, from which so much was hoped and which really did so very much good, have been abandoned, because, for one reason or another, Governments thought that it was to their interest to raise Customs duties. Is it in the least likely that Governments would act differently if there was an international silver agreement? The price of silver would be run up unnaturally and would run down correspondingly. There would be disappointment, loss and suffering; there would be an agitation to put an end to an unnatural state of things, and by-and-by notice would be given by one or more of the Governments to withdraw from the Convention. In the meantime suppose that, in some way or other, the countries which now hold inconveniently large masses of silver could dispose of a large proportion of those masses to the countries which are in a better condition—what would be the position of the latter when the Convention came to an end? Suppose, for instance, that the United States and the Latin Union, which together have about 260 millions sterling, nominal, of legal tender silver, could sell half that amount to ourselves and to India under the Convention, they would greatly benefit and we should be in a worse case than now—supposing always the Convention came to an end. Is it desirable—would it not, in fact, be folly—to make it possible for the nations which have hampered themselves with depreciated silver to shift the burden to us or to our dependencies? International concert, friendly co-operation, kindly wishes, are all good things in themselves and are much to be fostered, but it would be rather too much to pay for them if we were to relieve, at our own cost and risk, those who have made mistakes in regard to silver.

CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

SELDOM indeed during the last forty years have the signs of political unsettlement all over Europe been so visible or so numerous as they are this week. In France the Anarchist explosion of ten days ago has been followed by another and more dangerous explosion of those forces of discontent and disorder which constituted the strength of Boulangism. The opening of the German Reichstag is probably the commencement of the most serious struggle in the history of the Empire between the monarchic and the democratic elements in the Constitution. Holland and Belgium are each in a different stage of a struggle for Parliamentary reform which hitherto has chiefly served to emphasise and widen the cleft between the artisan classes and the *bourgeoisie*. Sweden has made a long step in a similar and even more bitter agitation. In Italy the situation is not made clearer nor the Ministry more stable either by Signor Crispi's anxiously expected speech at Palermo on Sunday or by the speech from the Throne on Wednesday. Hungary is at the beginning of a bitter struggle between the Government and the Roman Catholic Church, which will only be intensified by the indecision of the Emperor-

King, and fresh trouble is imminent in the Austrian Reichsrath. From the Balkans there is no very definite news, but the political and financial tension is increasing every day. Spain, again, is on the verge of a Parliamentary conflict, and fresh Republican, anti-dynastic, and anti-English manifestations are impending in Portugal. Finally, the cholera continues to warn us of what may happen next summer by sporadic appearances in Holland, Belgium, and Buda-Pesth. Hamburg is free, and Friday was to be observed as a day of thanksgiving.

But the interest of European politics since our last issue has lain primarily in France. On Friday the Ministry escaped from its difficulties over the principle of the Press Law. M. Ricard, the Minister of Justice, defended it in a half-hearted, ineffective fashion: M. Loubet put the issue clearly to the Chamber, treated it as a question of confidence, and was rewarded by the adoption of the Bill in principle by 320 to 228. But on Friday the Chamber—at least so say the "friends of order"—eviscerated the Bill by adopting, by 289 to 256, the amendment of M. Jullien, the purport of which our correspondent M. Yves Guyot explains elsewhere. The powers given by the Bill, indeed, are to English ideas of an extremely dangerous kind; but a nation that stands the *Juge d'Instruction* will stand a great deal of oppression.

But the explosion came on Monday. The most specific and detailed charges of corruption have been made for some time, especially by the Boulangist *Cocarde* and the anti-Semitic *Libre Parole*, against conspicuous personages alleged to have been concerned in floating the Panama Canal Company—notably M. Hébrard of the *Temps*, M. Floquet, M. Barbe, once Minister of Agriculture (now dead), M. Ranc, and M. Henry Maret, as owners of newspapers, and Baron Reinach, the cousin and father-in-law of M. Joseph Reinach, of the *République Française*. Baron Reinach died suddenly on Sunday, and, of course, his death was attributed either to suicide or to apoplexy consequent (it was said) on the discovery that copies of letters compromising some of his friends had been stolen. Neither story appears to be true; while the specific charges against the other personages are in all probability fantastically false. However, during the debate in the Chamber on Monday, M. Delahaye, a Boulangist, repeated them all, and charged 150 members of the Chamber with corruption (without giving names), provoking a scene such as even the French Chamber has rarely witnessed. A committee of investigation numbering thirty-three was decided on by 311 votes to 243. Tuesday was spent in efforts to select this committee. In the result the Right, which claimed a third of the seats, only got three, whence a scene resulting in the resignation of nine members out of the twenty-six first elected. On Wednesday the rest were elected; but the Right formally withdrew, and there is a general aversion to the inquiry. A proposal by M. Pouquery de Boisserin to arm the committee with the powers over witnesses possessed by a Court—to make it a kind of Inquisition—seemed certain of rejection. M. Brisson will preside.

Meanwhile, M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, his son, and three other directors have been charged with obtaining money by false representations, and the formal proceedings commenced on Thursday. M. de Lesseps, who is very ill and feeble, is kept in ignorance of the charge.

Colonel Dodds has entered Abomey without resistance, and the King has fled. On Tuesday, after its stormy sitting, the Chamber unanimously resolved to congratulate the troops.

The Swedish Rigsdaeg on Monday passed the new Military Bill, which considerably increases the length of the annual training. The Upper House adopted it without a division; the Lower (every member being present) by 142 to 82. The result is to intensify the agitation among the minority for universal suffrage. In Sweden the least qualification for the franchise is an annual taxed income of 800 kroner (£45), and only six per cent. of the population have votes; it is possible that the Ministry may consent to reduce this to 200 kroner, but the Liberals will take nothing short of manhood suffrage. They propose therefore to get together a volunteer *Folkerigsdaeg*, or "Parliament of the People," next spring, by the election by manhood suffrage of delegates in each parliamentary constituency to frame a Bill for the extension of the franchise. Two hundred thousand adhesions are practically certain, and the Liberals are very hopeful.

Three days before the opening of the session of the German Reichstag, the means by which the expenses of the new Military Bill are to be met were officially announced. Beer, spirits, and Stock Exchange transactions are to bear the burden—not, as was at first intended, tobacco. Together these will produce £2,900,000 additional annual revenue. The balance (£3,300,000 down and £3,200,000 annual expenditure) will presumably be made up by contributions from the several States. But the debate on the Prussian tax reforms does not look very hopeful. These reforms are strongly condemned by the Liberals as too favourable to the agricultural interest (*i.e.*, the large landlords), and there is a heavy deficit on this year's estimates.

The Emperor's speech at the opening of the Reichstag on Tuesday made reference to the prevalent commercial depression, but insisted that in view of the armaments of other nations the proposed increase was unavoidable. On Wednesday the Chancellor defended the scheme in a somewhat unsympathetic House. As the system (he argued) will take twenty years to come into full effect, neither the economic situation nor the pacific relations of Germany with other powers can be allowed to delay its adoption. France, both in her army and in her forts, is far stronger than in 1870; and the hostility of the Russian and German peoples contrasts with the friendliness of their Governments. He did his best to undo the unfavourable impression created by the recent utterances of the military organs, and disproved at some length Prince Bismarck's claim to have originated the war of 1870. But the prospects of the scheme are worse than ever. The alleged imminence of a military dictatorship in France is made much of as an argument for the scheme. But its fate is utterly uncertain, and the concluding proceedings of the Social Democratic Congress show that that party was never better disciplined, more sober, or more ready for a fight. It has emphatically condemned violence and rioting and even boycotting, and it is not seduced either by the so-called State Socialism of the German Government or by anti-Semitism. A debate on the relations of the military and civilians has further illustrated the unfavourable temper of the Reichstag.

In Austria Count Taaffe has offended the German Liberals—till now the bulk of his majority—by treating their support with contempt, and bidding for that of the Czechs. The Liberal party in consequence meditate a refusal to vote the Estimates.

Signor Crispi's great speech at Palermo on Sunday was a distinct bid for the support of a reorganised Left. It was largely historical; but he dwelt on the past services of that party, demanded Parliamentary reform and a return to *scrutin de liste*; single-member districts, which the last Parliament substituted, he condemned as "the negation of popular sovereignty," and as rendering local and personal considerations supreme. He attacked the Law of Papal guarantees; advocated "an armed nation" instead of a standing army, banking reform, and fresh colonisation; reminded his audience that before his own entry into the Cabinet Signor Depretis had formed the Triple Alliance and broken with France; declared that Italy got all the inconveniences of the Triple Alliance and her partners all the benefits, and that the economic war with France had been as disastrous to Italy as a war "with cannon"; condemned Di Rudini for renewing the Triple Alliance without obtaining for his country some relief

from her burdens; and concluded with an eloquent appeal to the rising generation to rally to political work under the Democratic Monarchy, which he had before said need differ from a Republic only in having a hereditary head. The speech—which is very variously received—is in curious conflict with the speaker's acts when last in power and his writings since. King Humbert's speech on Wednesday indicated that the Ministry will impose no fresh taxes, but will reduce the administration and the universities, complete the railway system, and carry on some of the suspended public works in Rome. It was strikingly eloquent, and was enthusiastically received—but that means nothing. Signor Zanardelli has been elected President of the Chamber, so that the Ministry has muzzled one dangerous opponent.

The programme of the new Hungarian Ministry includes the cultivation of commercial intercourse with the States of Eastern Europe, the recognition of the Jewish faith, and free exercise of all religions; as well as legislation in the direction of civil marriage, of what nature is as yet not announced. The Roman Catholic clergy is up in arms against this item, and the Upper House is very hostile to obligatory civil marriage. The Emperor, too, will not accept it, and so, though the Independent party urges the new Cabinet to take a decided attitude, the question is as yet far from a solution; and Herr Wekerle's statement that he does not wish to initiate a conflict with the Upper House only increases the unsettlement. He was, however, serenaded on Thursday, and his spirited appeal to the *bourgeoisie* may perhaps stimulate their enthusiasm.

There has been a report of an impending Balmacedist plot in the Chilian army; but prompt measures have been taken and, it is said, the danger has passed away.

BISMARCK, M.P.

BISMARCK was asked in the beginning of this month whether he would not appear in the German Parliament and share in guiding the political destinies of his country. He answered energetically, "No! You do not understand the majority of the present Reichstag. This majority would avoid me as it would the pest. Most of them would fear lest companionship with me would rob them of an invitation to Court, might interfere with the advancement of their sons, and that sort of thing."

Few Germans have travelled so little as Bismarck, for we cannot count as travel journeys made in state or upon official errands. As compared with such men as Luther, or Stein, or Moltke, or Gneisenau, he may be said to have led the life of a bureaucrat, isolated from the wholesome atmosphere of public opinion. Until dismissal from office, he spoke with undisguised contempt of the public press and other organs of popular feeling, insisting upon a quasi-regal autocracy as the sole adviser and representative of his master, the King and Emperor.

What wretched curs must Germany send to represent her in the Imperial Reichstag if his words are true! What experience can he have had that could give colour to such a monstrous slander upon a body of legislators second to none in scholarship if not political capacity? Imagine for a moment a great statesman and patriot out of office coming back to the scene of his triumphs, and not even asked to dinner by any of his former admirers and supporters! What can possibly have induced Bismarck to publish to the world the shame of his country in this brutal manner? Certainly it is not Caprivi, who is essentially a soldier and a gentleman, courteous to his opponents—a man who, in his two years of office, has successfully avoided every appearance of carrying personal bitterness into political discussion.

Bismarck could certainly not mean that the Emperor would persecute him, for he knows that during the last two years he has enjoyed complete immunity from any form of let or hindrance while indulging in a series of unprovoked attacks upon anything which appeared to represent his Emperor's policy. The late Chancellor had governed Prussia since 1862, and Germany since 1871; and if, in these days, he feels constrained to complain that he has no political following in his own country, the fact is notable.

Perhaps the late Minister judges of others as he does of himself. He would have had Caprivi in gaol or in exile long ago had that statesman said but one tittle of the things that Bismarck has been saying since he left office—assuming, of course, that Bismarck were Chancellor and Caprivi in opposition. Bismarck cannot understand why his Emperor deliberately pursues a magnanimous policy towards him. He has a long memory, albeit now and then a treacherous one, and recalls, perhaps, how, shortly after the Franco-German war, he charged an innocent man—Count Arnim—with high treason, because he had reasons to fear that his then ambassador to France might prove an inconvenient rival in the graces of his sovereign. Bismarck ruined that man completely. No one can to-day read the minutes of that trial without rubbing his eyes and questioning the authenticity of the official report; and one has to travel back in history to the days of Cardinal Wolsey or Jeffreys before it can be matched as a sample of political butchery. Bismarck made that man's son a social pariah in Berlin. As soon as the shadow of the Chancellor fell upon his father, everyone had to prove his allegiance to Bismarck by declining company with young Arnim. That family was isolated in Berlin as though the plague had fallen upon each member, and everyone knew why.

The German official is not more ungrateful or time-serving than any other servant of Government, and if he is to-day so bad as Bismarck makes us believe, who is to blame? When Arnim was disgraced, every servant of Bismarck, from Cabinet Ministers to the last letter-carrier on the streets, was warned as specifically as need be that henceforth the duty of a German official was to serve not his country, but Bismarck alone. He has made cowards of too-obedient men, and if the Emperor dismissed him, it was surely reason enough that in all his years of office he never produced a single official above the rank of a common clerk. Moltke made generals, Bismarck made copyists. Moltke's last years were sweetened by the reflection that he had not an enemy in the world; Bismarck is daily furnishing us with the evidence that he has made few honest friends.

Bismarck had an honest friend once, his name George von Bunsen, who was a few days ago visiting at Lord Salisbury's, and whose name here as well as in Germany is synonymous with honesty and political sagacity. He enjoyed to a singular degree the intimacy and confidence of the late Emperor Frederick, and as member of the German Parliament was one of Bismarck's active lieutenants in directing the public opinion of his country towards unity. In those days Bismarck could not do too much to flatter or conciliate such a power as Bunsen represented, for it was only by the co-operation of men so universally respected that all the German States could be brought to a bargain which meant Prussian supremacy for all time.

But German unity, as a political question, soon passed out of sight, like the slavery question in America. Other issues, notably that of Protectionism, came to the front. Bunsen was opposed to Bismarck's measures on this subject, and naturally did his duty as a representative of the people by explaining the subject to his constituents. For this unpardonable offence the Chancellor brought an action against his late friend for *lèse-Bismarck*, or some such mediæval crime, which was never

known in Prussian law until Bismarck came to the throne.

The Prussian courts are fortunately independent of the Prime Minister's favour, and acquitted Von Bunsen. The case was appealed, and Bunsen was again released. Bismarck lost his case in the courts of law, but had in reserve a revenge far sweeter than fine or imprisonment. Word was quietly passed throughout the country—to the army, the navy, and officials of every grade—that Bunsen was to be regarded as an enemy of his country—that is to say, that Bismarck disliked him. From that moment, and as long as Bismarck remained in power, Von Bunsen lived in Berlin as a man without a country. His house, which formerly had been the meeting-place of everything brilliant or distinguished in the capital, suddenly became deserted, as though its owner had been guilty of a nameless crime. Many subsequently apologised to the owner for their behaviour, and explained that it would involve dismissal to them if they dared to incur the displeasure of their master, assuring the family that it was frightful to live under such monstrous tyranny. Bismarck's exquisite revenge would have been sharp enough had Bunsen been a bachelor, but in this case not only did he suffer, but his large family as well, all of whom were forced to grow up under the crushing sense of their undeserved isolation. The philosopher has many reasons for thinking such isolation conducive to a wholesome state of mind. This may be the case, but the victim should be caught young, like a naval cadet.

The blow that struck Bunsen was keener than any sentence which the law could pass upon a malefactor, and served admirably the purpose of the man who conceived it, for it at once taught every member of Parliament what he might expect if he dared to speak the truth irrespective of the Lord Chancellor. Such an episode in Berlin assisted in making cowards of those who did not covet the crown of social martyrdom, and encouraged hypocrisy and every form of social demoralisation.

Are we to suppose that those who cut Count Arnim in the streets, or shunned the house of Bunsen, loved Bismarck because they obeyed him? May we not reasonably conclude that every one of these people hated the *régime* of such a man quite as much as they despised themselves? I have talked with many men who have worked with Bismarck and served him in his days of triumph, but it is only from such as Bunsen that I do not hear abuse of the late Chancellor. Those who once were Bismarck's tools revenge themselves in this way for the menial position they have been forced to occupy, but men like Bunsen feel too deeply to howl in the common chorus.

So thoroughly had Bismarck corrupted the Press of his country during his long term of office that to-day papers of considerable circulation cannot conceive of a man expressing an opinion upon the Emperor or Bismarck without being *officially inspired*, if not paid. I have no doubt that a German paper will be found capable of thinking that THE SPEAKER has received a sum of money from Caprivi or the Emperor for publishing this article. Many well-meaning German papers have kindly insisted that such opinions as I ventured to express in a recent book were inspired, if not edited, by the German Emperor, as though that busy man cared a snap of his fingers what was written by me or anyone else. I have never taken any notice of such statements in German papers, but in the *Standard* of the 21st of November is a paragraph suggesting that I have some mysterious literary partnership with William II. He writes exceedingly well, to be sure, and no man of letters need be ashamed of joining names with such a master of vigorous and concise expression; but, as he believes in the divine right of kings, and as I number amongst my heroes Cromwell and George Washington, the result of our political works would be startling.

POULTNEY BIGELOW.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN FRANCE.

IN order to obtain some understanding of the political situation in France at the present moment, our attention must first be directed to a matter which in itself might seem insignificant, but which, by reason of the weakness of the Government in respect to it by the hopes to which it has given rise, and by the efforts towards union on the part of certain Republicans and the more or less revolutionary Socialists which it has brought about, may be looked upon, not indeed as the cause, but as an expressive symptom of the present state of anxiety: this is the Carmaux strike.

The Carmaux coal-mines take their name from the town in Tarn (with 9,000 inhabitants) near which they are. In May, 1889, in the municipal elections, the miners of the Carmaux Company elected fellow workmen in opposition to the candidates of their employers, and the new Council chose one of their own number, M. Calvignac, as Mayor. Thenceforth M. Calvignac looked upon himself as a power above the regulations of the workshops. He would only work on his own days, at his own hours, whenever his official duties allowed him leisure. He became ill, too, and some time elapsed before he could resume his duties. It would seem that he was on regular leave. The directors, however, not recognising this, dismissed him at the beginning of August. On the 19th the workmen invaded the offices of the company, followed M. Humblot from room to room, and under threat of death constrained him to give in his resignation. We have, unfortunately, had proof that such menaces are not vain words. In Aveyron, the neighbouring department, at Decazeville, in 1887, the miners killed their director, M. Watsin. The gendarmes saved M. Humblot, fortunately. They arrested a certain number of the attacking party. Nine were sentenced to imprisonment for periods varying from two to nine months by the police tribunal, whereas before the Courts of Assize they would have been condemned to penal servitude.

The strike was arranged by Socialist deputies who met at Carmaux, but the chief organiser of it was a certain de Vierzon—one of those condemned at the time of the Commune, a real type of the workingman politician, adorned with an immense beard which draws to him the attention and the admiration of the mob. Lest any workman should desire to work, patrols were kept up during the night to guard the shafts, M. Baudin at their head. The gendarmes, desiring to put a stop to this, M. Baudin threatened them with a revolver and insulted them. The gendarmes, feeling that they were not supported by the Prefect and the Government, withdrew. For the three following months this singular state of things might be seen: anarchy organised at Carmaux with the tolerance of the Government. Some Socialist deputies secured interviews with M. Loubet, President of the Council and Minister of the Interior, and M. Viette, Minister of Public Works, and then telegraphed to the workmen, and without their statements being contradicted, "The Ministers are with us. You will win the day."

A certain number of Republican deputies and many newspapers saw in the Carmaux strike merely a political vengeance on Baron Reille and the Marquis de Solages. They forgot that the first duty of a Government is to maintain order, to make the law respected, and to preserve the liberty of labour. The Minister of the Interior feared the disapproval of some hundred deputies—men such as Clémenceau, Boulangists and Socialists mixed; and if he did forbid them one day by a decree which was quite unnecessary, he permitted M. Calvignac, the Mayor, to refuse to enforce it, and M. Baudin to continue his patrols, flourishing the red flag to the cry of "Vive la Révolution sociale!"

On the assembling of the Chamber on October 19th, interpellations were addressed to the Government as to the way in which it proposed to intervene in the Carmaux strike. M. Loubet gave his assurance

that he wished to maintain order and the liberty of labour—just what it was felt that he had neglected doing for the last two months. Then, in flat contradiction to his own declarations, on M. Clémenceau saying that the workmen would accept him in the *rôle*, he consented to be arbitrator in this conflict between workmen and employer, forgetting that the duty of a Minister is not to arbitrate but to govern.

MM. Clémenceau, Camille Pelletan, and Millerand, deputies, were the representatives of the workmen. They demanded (1) the reinstatement of M. Calvignac; (2) the reinstatement of all the workmen in the mine who had lost their posts; and (3) the dismissal of M. Humblot. On October 29th M. Loubet gave his decision as arbitrator. He reinstated M. Calvignac, who, however, was immediately granted leave of absence; he did not reinstate the workmen condemned for the affair of August 15th; and he did not require the dismissal of M. Humblot. MM. Clémenceau, Camille Pelletan, and Millerand telegraphed to the miners that Loubet had deceived them, and loaded him with insults. On October 28 they moved a resolution in favour of an amnesty for the workmen who had been condemned. This was defeated, but was supported by 192 votes. M. Dumay then moved the recall of troops from Carmaux, and was supported by 80 votes—supporters of Clémenceau, Boulangists, and Socialists. And the Minister of Public Works was to be seen in the tribune promising to set free the prisoners! The news was immediately carried to Carmaux by Clémenceau and the others. Clémenceau, on leaving the train, shouted "Vive la République!" The strikers replied "Vive la Révolution sociale!" and accompanied him to the place of meeting singing the Carmagnole. There a committee was formed, with M. Baudin as President, MM. Clémenceau and Camille Pelletan as assessors, and M. Millerand as secretary—an arrangement which suggests accurately the position which Radicals who ally themselves with Socialists and criminals may hope to occupy in regard to them: they will always follow, never lead. They will be looked upon as useful accomplices, but will be chiefs never. M. Clémenceau called upon the miners to resume their work, taking upon himself to give them their release, and affecting the *rôle* of pacificator of the strike.

As a matter of fact, the workmen had fully made up their minds to resume work, being at the end of their resources. M. Millerand left Carmaux for Lyons, where he was to take part in a meeting of alliance between Radicals and Socialists. He was badly enough received. He and his friends hope, however, to have a sufficiently powerful influence in the elections of 1894, by allying themselves with the Socialists, to continue masters of the Ministry.

But on November 8th we suddenly learned that at 11.30 a dynamite bomb had been left at the offices of the Carmaux Company, and that, having been carried to the police-station in the Rue des Bons Enfants, it had exploded there, killing five men. The excitement was intense. We remembered all the incitements and the threats. The jokes of the Carmaux workmen about the imaginary dangers of M. Humblot were proved to be misplaced. M. Camille Pelletan's assertion in *La Justice* and M. Rochefort's in *L'Intransigeant* that it was Baron Reille who had had the bomb placed in the offices were looked upon as senseless. A connection could not but be traced between the incitements and threats of Carmaux and the horrible crime which seemed like a symbol of the Social Revolution and the fulfilment of the words of the Carmagnole—

> "Tuons le marquis au son du fusil,
> Tuons le baron au son du canon."

An interpellation followed. The Chamber was unwilling to turn out a Ministry about a crime for which it could not be held directly responsible. An Order of the Day was passed expressing confidence in the "vigilance and resolution of the Government." Amongst the voters were Clémenceau, Pelletan, and Millerand, who would certainly have opposed this motion had the "vigilance and resolution" of the Government been real. When the public mind is excited by an event of this kind, the Government is required to do something—good or bad, but at least something. Accordingly a Bill, which had been introduced in May, after the Ravachol business, for the modification of the Press Law of July 29, 1881, was put in the Orders of the Day. According to this law, direct incitement to robbery, arson, and murder are punished, if not followed by crime, by from three months' to two years' imprisonment and by from 100 to 3,000 francs fine. So also are incitements to soldiers, sailors, or gendarmes to abandon their official duties. But at present an individual who should put up placards, publish writings, or make speeches such as would render him guilty of these crimes, cannot be arrested till after his final condemnation. If he is acquainted with the technicalities of procedure, he can make the trial drag on for nine months or a year. Meanwhile, he may continue his incitements! The present Bill was to permit the preventive arrest of the accused.

The Government arranged a sort of solemn *rendez-vous* for the discussion of this Bill, which is, of course, of only secondary importance, and from November 16th to November 20th we have been the witnesses of a strange spectacle, all the orators giving expression to their doctrines and setting forth their programmes as though at public meetings: M. de Mun attempting the defence of Christian Socialism; M. Ernest Roche appealing on behalf of Boulangist Socialists against the present state of society, and proposing an eight-hours day as the sovereign panacea; M. Aynard defending the *rôle* of the *bourgeoisie* in the evolution of progress! M. Loubet, replying indignantly to M. Roche's strictures upon the Republic, reminded him of the great social reforms that had been introduced under it, and concluded his speech by declaring that the duty of the Government was to maintain order and the liberty of labour.

Why have you not done so? was the natural reply. You ask for a new law. Have you enforced the laws already at your disposal? Have you not governed for three months under the influence of those revolutionary Socialists with whom you now break off alliance in the tribune? You speak of the need of alliance amongst Republicans. But have you not subordinated the policy of the 326 Republicans in the Chamber to the anarchical fantasies of 100 Clémenceauite Socialists and Boulangists?

M. Loubet did not, could not, reply. But men who had at heart the cause of order could not refuse to consider the Bill which he wished passed. He made it a question of confidence, and confidence was expressed in him by the mistrustful and disclaimed by those to whom he had yielded. This was irony pure and simple.

The irony continued. After the Government had declared with so much emphasis that their Bill was indispensable, they accepted an amendment, proposed by M. Jullien, which completely nullifies it, providing that the accused cannot be arrested until he has been brought before the Court of Assize. The consequence of this is that in the departments, where the Court of Assize meets only every three months, the accused may continue his crimes till the eve of the trial, and then quietly cross over the frontier.

Practically the situation is not unlike that of 1888, in the period of Boulangism. The Radicals such as M. Clémenceau, who have always been clever at upsetting Ministries and at doing mischief in Parliament, were silenced as long as Boulanger lived. He died in September, 1891, and ever since October 31st Clémenceau has been crying, "The truce is at an end"—meaning the agreement amongst Republicans to forget the questions which divided for those which united them. It is true that he himself did not observe this agreement. The fall of the Freycinet Ministry was the consequence of this rupture. The Boulangists had been looked on as outside the pale

of the Republican majority. M. Loubet included them. He was full of deference also towards the Socialists, even ingratiating himself with criminals.

The situation is a grave one for those who have built up the Republic and wish it to be a Republic of democratic reform and progress. If they do not prove themselves capable of maintaining order and security, and if they do not show that they can *govern*, the country will return to the Monarchists of yesterday, to-day allied to the Republic; and if these latter come to power, the result will not be order, but reaction. YVES GUYOT.

DISRAELI AND THE JOURNALIST.

THE STORY OF A SCRAP OF PAPER.

IT is a very small scrap which lies before me as I write—merely a single half-sheet of that thin blueish-grey note-paper which reporters and leader-writers of the old school were wont to use in writing for the press. The little sheet has been doubled, and has evidently been sent by hand from the writer to the person to whom it is addressed. The message it bears is written in faint pencil-marks, and runs as follows:—

"DR. SIR,—Allow me to congratulate you on your most magnificent speech. I saw your servant; and I do not think you need trouble yourself about me any more.—Yours truly,

"J. F. NEILSON."

There is an endorsement in ink on the note, in the bold handwriting which autograph-collectors know and love. It is in these words: "1844, Oct. 3rd, Nilson (*sic*), the reporter of the *Times*: written in the *Athenæum*." And then, by way of completing the contents of this pathetic little scrap of paper which, across the gulf of nearly half a century, has been wafted to my desk, there is the address it originally bore, written, like the note itself, in pencil—"B. Disraeli, Esq., M.P."

What are the history and meaning of this relic of a great man's days of storm and strife? Anything relating to Disraeli's early career is of interest to a world which has not yet forgotten his wonderful struggle with adverse fortune, and his astounding success. It so happens that of my own knowledge I can supply enough of the story of the scrap of paper of which I am, for the moment, the custodian, to link it with more than one interesting episode in the statesman's career. Five-and-twenty years ago I was in the habit of meeting Mr. Neilson, the well-known reporter of the *Times*, almost nightly in the gallery of the House of Commons. He was a white-haired, rosy-cheeked Scotsman, of pleasant aspect and address, whose tongue, even after a lifetime spent in London, betrayed his nationality. Though somewhat reserved in his bearing towards the majority of his colleagues in the gallery, he had enough about him of Scottish clannishness to cause him to associate on friendly terms with those whose names told of a Northern parentage. Thus it came about that in those far-off days, when Mr. Disraeli was enjoying his brief first Premiership, with a constant sense of the fact that he was confronted nightly by the most formidable opponent a politician ever had to face, I enjoyed many long talks with Mr. Neilson over his past career. The traditions of the gallery spoke of some mysterious link existing between the Prime Minister and the reporter; and my youthful curiosity, stimulated by the talk of the place, led me to make inquiries on the subject. Neilson was a typical journalist of the old school—one of those men who would have felt positively outraged if they had seen their own names in print, and who believed devoutly in anonymity as the real shield and buckler of the press. He was, besides, no braggart, and would never have boasted of the friendship of any man, however great. It was, therefore, with some difficulty that I learned the truth; but, bit by bit, in our many talks, he unburdened himself, and I learned all that there was to know. The tale was simple enough, but it was interesting as showing something of the struggle through which Disraeli had to pass ere he was able to command the attention of the House of Commons and the country. It seemed that in his early days, as a member of the staff of the *Times*, Neilson had occasion to go to Wycombe to report an election-speech by Mr. Disraeli. The young adventurer, learning that he represented the then all-powerful newspaper, sought his acquaintance, and asked if he might be allowed to revise the report of his speech. Mr. Neilson naturally complied with the request—one frequently made to reporters. In this simple incident began the connection between the two men. Disraeli, having got into Parliament, found that, whilst the House would hardly listen to him, the press would scarcely vouchsafe to notice him. In these circumstances he sought out his quondam acquaintance at Wycombe, and asked his help. Neilson, who had been impressed by the young man's power, was quite willing to do what he could for him, and for a number of years he acted as a kind of guardian angel over his speeches, seeing that full justice was done to them in the gallery, getting from him the classical quotations, which were more commonly used by orators in those days than now, letting him see the manuscript report, so that he might correct any glaring errors, and generally doing his best to further his interests so far as was consistent with his duty to the *Times*. In all this he acted from pure good nature and without any thought of reward. Nobody in those days imagined that the time would ever come when the despised young Jew would have decorations and titles and pensions to bestow upon those who served him. He was fighting the battle of life single-handed; and Neilson, admiring the pluck and energy with which he fought, readily rendered him those little services which a man in his position could do for a public speaker. The end of this episode in their lives is told in the scrap of paper that lies before me, which Disraeli himself gave to one of his earliest and most intimate friends, with whom he had spoken years afterwards of the debt he owed to "Neilson of the *Times*." In 1844, the time which he himself had predicted came at last; the House of Commons was forced to listen to his brilliantly bitter invective, and the great statesman who had despised him was compelled to own that he had met with an equal under whose keen steel he was destined in the end to fall. No need, then, for special help or favour from the humble reporter. The modest Scotsman was himself the first to recognise this fact, and with simple manliness penned the lines which conveyed at once his congratulations and his farewell.

And was this the end? It might have been. Whilst there is no class of men who are more eager to avail themselves of the help which the press alone can give them, politicians as a rule, especially when they have attained the object of their ambition, are singularly indifferent to those from whom they have received that help. No man knew this better than Neilson did, and I doubt not that it was his own self-respect, foreseeing, as he thought, the inevitable end, which led him, in the case of Disraeli, to withdraw before he was dismissed. But, happily for human nature, this little note was not the end. For many years, indeed, it seemed that it was. When I first talked to Neilson, I asked him if he had ever received any token of regard from the great man he had helped. His face lighted up with the smile which his friends will still remember. "Yes," he said; "he asked me once to Hughenden, but, of course, I did not go." Up to that time, that was all; but a few months later, Disraeli, on the resignation of Lord Derby, became Prime Minister, and one of his first acts was to renew his acquaintance with the reporter. He wrote to him, and in the kindest terms acknowledged the debt he owed him, and said that it had been his pleasing duty to recommend him to the Queen for a Civil List pension

Mr. Neilson, who, during his long connection with the *Times*, was the most loyal and devoted of servants, placed the letter before his employers. They did not think it consistent with the independence and dignity of their journal that one of their employés should be the recipient of a pension; but I believe that they made up to Neilson the pecuniary loss entailed upon him by his refusal of the Prime Minister's gracious offer.

Yet a little later, Mr. Disraeli paid his first visit as Prime Minister to the Guildhall. He had a great reception, such as the City knows so well how to accord to those whom it honours above most men. As he stood on the daïs beside his wife, surrounded by a brilliant group of princes, statesmen, warriors, and civic magnates, whilst the deafening cheers still rang in his ears, he looked before him, and saw at a little distance, among a crowd of humbler guests, his old acquaintance, "Neilson of the *Times*." Instantly he stepped from the daïs, and, going up to Neilson, shook him warmly by the hand. "I want to introduce you to my wife," he said, and forthwith led the reporter into the innermost circle of celebrities. "My dear," he said, addressing Lady Beaconsfield, "this is Mr. Neilson, of whom I have so often spoken to you, and to whom I owe more than I do to any other man." Neilson, in that proud moment, standing on that historic spot by the hero of the hour, must have felt more than repaid for the services the memory of which is preserved by this little scrap of paper. So, at least, he told me, when, with a happy face, he related the incident a few weeks later. R.

THE PLAGUE OF POSTERS.

IT was once hinted by a prominent politician, during an interval of vote-catching, that the Democracy did not care a button for architecture, and that the beauty of London, apart from commercial utility, made no appeal to the mass of our citizens. To the spectator who views the world of pictorial advertisement with an æsthetic eye there may seem a leaven of truth in this indictment. In this respect no city is uglier than London, except New York. The moment the rambler perceives that any premises on his daily route are about to undergo repairs, he knows that the inevitable hoarding will present the equally inevitable outbreak of glaring posters, as though the unfortunate structure were a prey to some horrible disease. There is no reason to suppose that the street which is thus afflicted is in any special need of the multitudinous soaps and balms which are suddenly urged upon it by gigantic letters and violent hues. It is highly probable that the children in that street enjoy their legitimate supply of farinaceous food, and that no maternal conscience is stricken with remorse by the portrait of the fat baby who is the triumphant flower of a much trumpeted diet. But the superfluous energy of commerce demands all the same that every nostrum which can employ a bill-sticker shall bask in the sunshine of publicity, wherever it is possible to secure the service of a board or a wall. Mr. Waterhouse, whose artistic soul is in arms against this disfigurement of London, is disinclined to make any compromise with competition. He holds up the example of an eminent firm of biscuit manufacturers who never advertise, and he proposes to organise a society for discouraging the use and purchase of commodities which proclaim their virtues literally on the house-top. This self-denying ordinance would probably prove too severe even for the most æsthetic, and Mr. Waterhouse himself would scarcely be prepared to say in reply to the interrogative glances of his friends, "I have given up washing, don't you know, because every soap is so obtrusively advertised." Mr. W. B. Richmond maintains that such articles as pills, mustard, and tooth-powder belong to the privacy of life and ought not to be thrust upon the public gaze; but somehow the delicacy of the community is not shocked when the patent medicine man pushes his wares in the open street, and the picture of a gentleman applying a plaster to his chest excites no remark when it appears on a wall or on an illuminated transparency, though it would be deemed offensive if it were exhibited in a room. Nay, unless some public spirit can be aroused to make an effectual protest, we shall see the plaster and the corset decorating the clouds, and possibly the tail of a comet, by some development of a patent which is associated with the name of Mr. Sydney Hodges—an artist who ought to know better.

It must be sorrowfully admitted that the literature of advertisements is often amusing if not instructive. The present writer has frequently travelled in an omnibus solely to improve his mind with the philosophy of a certain soap. Of the actual merits of this article he knows nothing, but the journey from Charing Cross to Tooting has been made a liberal education by the proverbs and aphorisms and extracts from illustrious authors with which the literary advertiser has consecrated his instrument of cleanliness. The Board School manager ought to pass his pupils through the omnibuses as a sort of final standard, and the thought of the gutter child applying himself with special zest to soap because it reminded him of a Shakespearian quotation, must gladden the heart of every educational reformer. Then, who has not spent at the stations on the Underground Railway many a moment teeming with new and surprising ideas suggested by the advertising genius? The contents bills of the weekly journals—modesty forbids us to specify the most luminous—are a perfect granary of thought. It is quite unnecessary to spend your sixpence on some of our contemporaries; a study of their bills from week to week affords a sufficient index both of intellect and temper. You even forget the names of some stations: they are lost in the voluminous dictionary of everything that pertains to man except the place he happens to be in and the other place to which he is desirous of going. Lord Grimthorpe is so much impressed by this minor detail that he wants the name of a station to be inscribed on a diagonal board, which shall stand out from the sublime host of advertisements and save the stranger from the mistaken notion that he has arrived at the birthplace of some celebrated food for cattle, or the fountain of a world-renowned whiskey. There is some merit in this idea, seeing that the traveller learns so little from the dead language which is the mother tongue of most railway porters; but some of us would not exchange the riches of the advertising world for the most precise information that railway topography can afford. There is, moreover, an important class of entertainers whose interests have been entirely overlooked by Mr. Waterhouse. The theatrical manager is largely dependent on his posters for popular patronage. In many provincial towns the pictorial advertisement makes or mars the melodrama. Just as the rustic is drawn to the show by the portrait of the fat lady or the human ostrich, so many a playgoer chooses his evening's amusement from the tragic incidents, the murders and hairbreadth escapes, which are unfolded on the hoardings. To interdict these would be to inflict an intolerable hardship on a hard-working body of public servants, and to deprive many a waif and stray of all the colour and romance that life has to offer him. With Mr. Waterhouse's protest against the depravation of beautiful scenery by the hideous artifices of the advertiser, to whom neither the mountain-top nor the poetry of the glen is sacred, we have every sympathy, and the County Council which shall set the example of forbidding the banns between a waterfall and any sauce or pickles, however illustrious, will deserve the thanks of every lover of the picturesque.

Of the expedient proposed by some reformers, it is sufficient to say that a tax on advertisements is

no guarantee of artistic propriety. The money would be cheerfully paid, and then extracted from the pockets of the public. There is a tax on advertisements in Paris, but that does not prevent the enormity which may be witnessed in nearly every Parisian theatre, of a drop scene covered with *affiches*. The London County Council has done excellent service by making war on sky-signs, and by a regulation fixing the height of hoardings. Mr. W. B. Richmond's suggestion that bills should not exceed a certain size and should be fixed in frames like those used by Messrs. Willing, would bring order out of the chaos of advertisements; but it would be necessary to exempt the theatrical poster which is the Academy of the pavement, and the designs which a few artists of repute have contributed to the advertiser's gallery. In this direction, perhaps, the policy of æsthetic compulsion should be pursued, and a Pictorial Collectivism would do more for the universal joy than most of the articles in the Socialist propaganda.

MODERN GERMAN NOVELISTS.—III.

Gottfried Keller.

IT probably would be a thankless task to try and induce foreigners to read our great—perhaps greatest—German novelist. Only a certain portion of every country's genius and talent is suitable for indiscriminate exportation, and it is by no means easy to spread abroad over the Continent a taste for, say, Robert Browning or George Meredith. Without wishing to force dangerous comparisons, one might well point out many resemblances between the gifts and failings of Gottfried Keller and Browning, or between the English and the German novelist. As is more or less the case with Meredith, critics praise Keller up to the sky, and ambitious, would-be "souls" struggle with his works, which a small community lovingly know by heart; whilst hundreds of highly educated men and women candidly confess their inability to wade through a single chapter, and the general public only just know him by name. With both writers recognition came late in life, but Keller, the older of the two, had three years ago the efficient, though undesired, advertisement of death, and the accounts of his funeral, together with elaborate obituary notices, helped to push his works into a tenth and an eleventh edition.

It is the old, but ever discouraging, discrepancy between merit and popular success; the old story of the great talent, who sees with his own eyes, feels with his own heart, and, therefore, talks a language which the general public do not understand, whereas all the emotions and sensations of a small talent are steeped in the tastes and ideas of the day, which everyone recognises and admires. Then, as the tastes and the ideas change, the masses awaken slowly to the understanding of those solitary men who have gone, but whose works have remained. It is true that the novel-writers' popular art has often proved an exception to that rule, but not in this case, and Keller has shared the distinguished fate of a Shelley, a Heinrich von Kleist, a Berlioz, and a Corot.

The language, which his contemporaries have been so slow in learning, is neither mystical nor involved—its strangeness lies in a rugged simplicity and an unconventional individuality. He gives his *coin de la nature, vu à travers un tempérament*. The nature he describes is his own Switzerland; the little walled-in towns, the solitary farms, and the cheerful social intercourse of a country parsonage; and his temperament is primitively healthy, full of quaint, mediæval humour, and with an undercurrent of deep, latter-day devotion to nature. The sadly Teutonic fault of diffuseness weighs upon many of his books, as also the equally prevalent lack of composition. His homely Swiss accents may often jar upon readers accustomed to the perfect taste of more cosmopolitan writers, who, on the other side of the Atlantic, would be admiringly called "high-toned authors." Keller is subtle, but not highly polished; deep, but intensely simple; sarcastic and humorous, but never witty and never "chic."

A great part of his uneventful life is transcribed in the "Grüne Heinrich,"* a lengthy, disjointed, but most remarkable biographical novel, psychologically educational like "Wilhelm Meister" and "Richard Feveril." The son of a widow, Gottfried Keller grew up without any parental restraint, and after an interrupted schooling, insisted on becoming a painter. He had much to suffer under inefficient and uncongenial masters, but still more from his own doubting, reserved, and unguided character. A girl he was attached to died young, and he had no real and intimate friends. He continued his landscape painting in Munich, and studied science and philosophy in Berlin, passing through many a religious and moral crisis, until finally he found peace in the monotonous occupation of a clerk to the municipality of Zürich. In this simple fulfilment of citizen duties fifteen years passed away, and the remainder of his life was spent in Zürich; a lonely bachelor existence, glorified only by the outspoken and unanimous admiration of Germany's most noted authors and critics.

From his native land he drew that forcible realism which we usually associate with everything Swiss. We find in him frank humour, vivid local colouring, brilliantly picturesque historical allusions, and a sound burgher-foundation of respectable common-sense. We recognise the keen political interests of one sprung from an old republic in his hatred of the Jesuit as of an oligarchy, and in his indignant satire against philistine self-satisfied indolence, which burns through the humorous, magnificently original "Seldwyla Folk." But we can also plainly trace the influence of his German studies, Germany representing to him by no means the land of Bismarck, but the home of Goethe, of Jean Paul, and of the Swabian Romantic School. These two rather divergent strains, these conflicting Swiss and German elements, invest him with such marked personality of his own.

"Romeo and Julia in the Village," one of the "Seldwyla" series, first met with something like success, and is a strong, yet touching, passionate, yet simple, love tragedy of everyday country life. Then followed the "Züricher Novellen," with their rich historical colouring and vigorous—occasionally wildly grotesque—sense of humour. "The Seven Legends" are most delightful versions—some would call them travesties—of mediæval legends, retaining the picturesque surroundings and stories, but investing them, in an inimitably original way, with modern ethics and modern ideas. They are short and concise stories, and written in a most admirable German: classic in its simplicity yet warmed with occasional lovable reminiscences of homely dialect. The "Sinngedicht" has made many friends, and can boast of many beautiful passages; but it requires a German turn of mind to forgive the frequent interruptions and interludes of the narrative. And "Martin Salander," an interesting, rather severely naïve, novel, with a decided political basis, finally closes the list of his works. This list seems short compared with the full span of his years, but long, when the multitudes of his full-blooded, living men and women crowd around your mind's-eye.

The delineation of children and women is a fair test of literary power. This test Keller can well stand. Perhaps few authors have surpassed his analysis of a schoolboy's thoughts, temptations, and weaknesses, and few have so efficiently taught pedagogy without ever preaching a cut-and-dried science. "The secret of education," he once remarks, "is not only to possess that ineffaceable vital youthfulness which alone is capable of feeling with a child,

* Der Grüne Heinrich. Die Leute von Seldwyla (Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorf), Züricher Novellen, Das Sinngedicht, Sieben Legenden, Martin Salander. Published by Wilhelm Herz, Berlin.

but also an assured superiority in all eventualities of life." And again, he calls "the wrestling with a stern and cautious father, who can look beyond the threshold of home, a steel bath for youthful expansion, different from undefended mother's love." His conception of women is peculiar, and, notwithstanding the totally different surroundings and social position, his heroines and those of George Meredith often show the same ripe individuality, the same warm-blooded life, the same natural, winning charm, which only appears strange to us through being so widely removed from the conventional graces described in the conventional novel. As with Meredith, the hero is usually in love with several young persons at the same time, all of whom are equally attached to him, and all of whom conflictingly influence and mould his character and destiny. The "Grüne Heinrich" explains to the sensual, but good-hearted, straightforward Judith the difference between his feelings towards her and towards the simple, delicately pure village schoolmaster's child. "Now I should like to suffer anything and everything for Anna, and to obey her slightest wish; for her sake I should like to become an honest good fellow, in whom all is clear and clean, so that she might look through me as through a crystal. I should wish to live in all eternity with her soul, even if from to-day I should never see her again. All this I could not do for you. And yet I love you with my whole heart, and if you desired as a proof that I should allow you to thrust a knife into me, I should, this instant, unhesitatingly stand still, and quietly let my blood flow down on your knees." Keller's artistic studies give a strength and substance to his remarks on æsthetic subjects. He scathes the ranting set who "praisingly vaunt as a tragically-situated idealist the architect whose church-tower falls to pieces, and sneer at those whose towers remain standing as sordidly-minded pot-boilers." "This sort of idealism is indolence proceeding from want of conscious and well-balanced experience. It tries to replace the industry of real life through miracles, tries to make bread out of stones instead of ploughing and sowing, instead of awaiting the growth of the ears, instead of reaping and threshing and grinding and baking." And again, "Only a few have never known the fatal term 'genius' before having simply and artlessly accomplished a satisfactory and solid amount of life, learning, work and achievement. It is even doubtful whether the most modest success does not require a firm foundation of preconceived intentions and all apparatus of struggling genius; and the only difference may be that whereas the real genius hides and burns this apparatus, the sham genius elaborately parades it—a mouldering scaffold around an uncompleted temple." His poetic creed is well expressed in what he remarks on "the self-forgetting love of existence, of all that has been formed and has remained, a love which honours the significance of every object and feels the unity and depth of the world." Or shall we end with these words, which sound strange, yet sympathetic, on the lips of a contemporary of Schopenhauer and of Nietsche: "It is higher and subtler to respect than to despise."

English taste is curiously divided between Latin and Teutonic tendencies. There are those whose ideal is polish and wit and perfection, and those who will forgive uncouth forms for the sake of depth, humorous quaintness and creative power. Needless to say it is amongst these latter that Gottfried Keller's English admirers will be found.

Berlin. MARIE VON BUNSEN.

THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB.

THIS, the ninth season of the New English Art Club, has been marked by a decisive step. The club has rejected two portraits by Mr. Shannon. So that the public may understand and appreciate the importance of this step, I will sketch, *à coups de crayon peu fondus*, the portrait of a lady as I imagine Mr. Shannon might have painted her. A woman of thirty, an oval face, and a long white brow; pale brown hair, tastefully arranged with flowers and a small plume. The eyes large and tender, expressive of a soul that yearns and has been misunderstood. The nose straight, the nostrils well-defined, slightly dilated; the mouth curled, and very red. The shoulders large, white, and over-modelled, with cream tints; the arms soft and rounded; diamond bracelets on the wrists; diamonds on the emotional neck. Her dress is of the finest duchesse satin, and it falls in heavy folds. She holds a bouquet in her hands; a pale green garden is behind her; swans are moving gracefully through shadowy water, whereon the moon shines peacefully. Add to this conception the marvellous square brushwork of the French studio, and you have the man born to paint English duchesses—to paint them as they see themselves, as they would be seen by posterity; and through Mr. Shannon our duchesses realise all their aspirations, present and posthumous. The popularity of these pictures is undoubted; wherever they hang, and they hang eveywhere, except in the New English Art Club, couples linger. "How charming, how beautifully dressed, how refined she looks!" and the wife who has not married a man *à l'hauteur de ses sentiments* casts on him a withering glance, which says, "Why can't you afford to let me be painted by Mr. Shannon?"

We are here to realise our ideals, and far is it from my desire to thwart any lady in her aspirations, be they in white or violet satin, with or without green gardens. If I were on the hanging committee of the Royal Academy, all the duchesses in the kingdom should be realised, and then—I would create more duchesses, and they, too, should be realised by Messrs. Shannon, Hacker, and Solomon. And when these painters arrived, each with a van filled with new satin duchesses, I would say, "Go to Mr. Agnew, ask him what space he requires, and anything over and above they shall have it." I would convert the Chantrey Fund into white satin duchesses, and build a museum opposite Mr. Tate's for the blue. I would do anything for these painters and their duchesses except hang them in the New English Art Club.

For it is entirely necessary that the public should never be left for a moment in doubt as to the intention of this club. It is open to those who paint for the joy of painting; and it is entirely disassociated from all commercialism. Muslin ballet-girl or satin duchess it matters no jot, nothing counts with the jury but *l'idée plastique*—comradeship—money gain or loss are waived. The rejection of Mr. Shannon's portraits will probably cost the club four guineas a year, the amount of his subscription, and it will certainly lose to the club the visits of his numerous drawing-room following. This is to be regretted—in a way. The club must pay its expenses, but it were better that it should cease than an infringement of principle should be incurred. Either we may or we may not have a gallery from which popular painting is excluded. I think that we should; but I know that Academicians and dealers are in favour of enforced prostitution in art. That men should practice painting for the mere love of paint is wholly repugnant to every healthy-minded Philistine. The critic of the *Daily Telegraph* described the pictures in the present exhibition as things that no one would wish to possess; he then pointed out that a great many were excellently well painted. Quite so. I have always maintained that there is nothing that the average Englishman—the reader of the *Daily Telegraph*—dislikes so much as good painting. He regards it in the light of an offence, and what makes it peculiarly irritating in his eyes is the difficulty of declaring it to be an immoral action; he instinctively feels that it is immoral, but somehow the crime seems to elude definition. The Independent Theatre was another humble

endeavour which sorely tried the conscience of the average Englishman. That anyone should wish to write plays that were not intended to please the public—that did not pay—was an unheard-of desire, morbid and unwholesome as could well be, and meriting severest rebuke. But the Independent Theatre has somehow managed to struggle into a second year of life, and the New English Art Club has opened its ninth exhibition; so I suppose that the *Daily Telegraph* will have to make up its mind, sorrowfully, of course, and with regret, that there are folk still in London who are not always ready to sell their talents to the highest bidder.

Praise of the New English Art Club is understood to mean that the walls are covered with masterpieces, and that with every exhibition painting has been discovered afresh. But my praise is the simplest statement of the truth. The present exhibition is the most interesting we have had in London this year. There now hangs in the New English Art Club a better portrait and a better landscape than any that hung on the walls of this year's Academy. The Editor of THE SPEAKER seems not disinclined to print letters controverting the articles I send him. Correspondents are numerous. Perhaps one will undertake to name a portrait in this year's Academy better than the portrait (47), Mr. Sargent's "Portrait Study." Perhaps the same, or another, correspondent will undertake to name a better landscape than (87) "Evening in Spring," by Mr. Bernard Sickert; or (100) "Henley Regatta," by the same painter.

By the side of a fine Hals, Mr. Sargent's portrait study might look small, thin, and over-explained, but nothing short of a fine Hals would affect its real beauty. A more engaging and enticing work in modern art I hardly know. I returned to it again and again, and every time to discover new beauties. Truly a charming picture, perfect from end to end. My admiration for Mr. Sargent has often hesitated, but this picture completely wins me. It has all the qualities of Mr. Sargent's best work; and it has something more: it is painted with that measure of calculation and reserve which is present in all work of the first order of merit. I find the picture described with sufficient succinctness in my notes: "A half-length portrait of a woman, in a dress of shot-silk—a sort of red violet, the colour known as puce. The face is pale, the chin is prominent and pointed. There were some Japanese characteristics in the model, and these have been selected. The eyes are long, and their look is aslant; the eyebrows are high and marked; the dark hair grows round the pale forehead with wig-like abruptness, and the painter has attempted no attenuation. The carnations are wanting in depth of colour—they are somewhat chalky; but what I admire so much is the exquisite selection, besides the points mentioned—the shadowed outline, so full of the form of her face, and the markings about the eyes, so like her; and the rendering is full of the beauty of incomparable skill. The neck, how well placed beneath the pointed chin! How exact in width, in length, and how it corresponds with the ear; and the jawbone is under the skin; and the anatomies are all explicit—the collar-bone, the hollow of the armpit, and the muscle of the arm, the placing of the bosom, its shape, its size, its weight. Mr. Sargent's drawing speaks without hesitation, a beautiful, decisive eloquence, the meaning never in excess of the expression, nor is the expression ever redundant."

I said that we find in this portrait reserve not frequently to be met with in Mr. Sargent's work. What I first noticed in the picture was the admirable treatment of the hands. They are upon her hips, the palms turned out, and so reduced is the tone that they are hardly distinguishable from the dress. As the model sat the light must have often fallen on her hands, and five years ago Mr. Sargent might have painted them in the light. But the portrait tells us that he has learnt the last and most difficult lesson—how to omit. Any touch of light on those hands would rupture the totality and jeopardise the colour-harmony, rare without suspicion of exaggeration or affectation. In the background a beautiful chocolate balances and enforces the various shades of the shot-silk, and with severity that is fortunate. By aid of two red poppies, worn in the bodice, a final note in the chord is reached—a resonant and closing consonance.

Mr. Sargent's portraits are often improvisations; this is an exception; the face, if I am not mistaken, was retouched. It seems more closely knit than usual; a beautiful work, certainly: I should call it a perfect work were it not for one thing: the drawing is a little obvious: in places we can detect it; it does not *coule de source* like the drawing of the very great masters.

I have come to the end of my space, and must postpone the rest of my remarks on an interesting and remarkable exhibition till next week.

G. M.

THE WEEK.

"A. B. W." WRITES:—"MRS. JOHN WOOD has returned to the London stage in a wheel-chair, a vehicle as unsuited to her energetic person as the play which MR. HADDON CHAMBERS has 'written round' the chair, under the title of *The Old Lady*, is inadequate to the merits of the Criterion Company. To her chair the old lady is glued for three acts, save for one brief moment, when she rises from it to administer a sound thwacking to a rascally Scot who, after inducing her to lose her money at Monte Carlo on his infallible 'seestem,' has withdrawn from his engagement to marry her, on the plea of her penniless condition. Her fortune is, however, recovered at the tables by her chair-attendant, a sanctimonious person with a conscientious aversion to gambling, and with it she makes the course of true love run smooth for the *jeune premier* and the *ingénue*. The adventures and misadventures of these young persons in the company of a couple of Monte Carlo sharpers, male and female, make up the rest of the story. With the exception of the old lady—who is obviously related to the typical 'rich aunt' of Thackerayan tradition—there is no real character in the play. MR. CHAMBERS'S sense of fun (even in the Molièresque business of the thwacking) is crude, and the too frequent 'damns' of his dialogue went near to irritating the pit on the first night into 'damning' the piece. *Similia similibus*, I suppose. A more serious cause of irritation, as being far less easily removable, is the absence of dramatic progress, the action being entirely suspended throughout an act, showing (or, rather, grossly caricaturing) the scene at the *rouge-et-noir* table at Monte Carlo. MRS. JOHN WOOD is assisted by MISS ROSINA FILIPPI, MR. FRED KERR, MR. W. H. VERNON, MR. STANDING, and other players of talents far superior to the present opportunity for their exercise."

PANAMA, a recent visitor writes, is a town half of old Spanish ruins, and half of modern cosmopolitan shanties. It is a miserable hole, with neither a public promenade nor a theatre. Travellers curse the luck which compels them to spend three or four days there. The only distraction is the roulette-table of a gaming-house, where the players easily break the bank, whose capital is very slender. Cock-fights are also resorted to. On Christmas Day fourteen cocks with steel spurs are let loose in the arena; the owner of the last survivor has the right to all the slain. The railway between Panama and Colon runs through a pestilential swamp, where travellers usually catch the fever. The construction of this line cost, it is calculated, a man per sleeper. The workmen used to commit suicide under the depression of labour in such circumstances. One morning seven Chinamen were found hanging on the same tree.

THE rivalry of Paris and Chicago over the question of their exhibitions is becoming fruitful of most exciting prospects. The world is already aware that Paris has determined on an exhibition for the year 1900, which is to leave next year's institution at Chicago completely in the shade. It is also known that, when a patriotic Chicagoan heard that one of the attractions of that exhibition was to be a monster telescope which would bring the moon within a yard of our vision, he instantly gave an order for a telescope for his city which would bring the moon, if possible, within half a yard. Paris, hearing of this vulgar piracy, the trick of a barren and unscrupulous imagination, dropped her telescope project with disdain, and now we learn from the *Revue des Inventions* of the project which is to take its place. It is nothing less than a model city built within the walls of the exhibition: not a reproduction from the past in pasteboard and stage properties, but a model city of the future, a realisation of the dream of those who believe it possible, with the aid of modern science and art and modern ideas of society, to construct for humanity a Paradise on this earth—a real city with real houses, real hotels, real streets and squares and fountains, and real inhabitants, and a model municipality of its own, and laws of property, labour, and general well-being which will make everyone living in it as happy as the day is long. Neopolis—that is to be its name—is to have between three and five thousand inhabitants, and it is to remain when the exhibition has passed away, so as to serve as a light and an exemplar to civilised humanity, a herald of the millennium—an object-lesson worth all the propagandism of dreamers and theorists!

CHICAGO will hardly pirate this idea. It is such a one as Paris alone, the city of the Feast of the Federation, could carry to triumph. The architects and engineers of France are to send in their designs, but, whether they go for suggestions to Antioch with its shaded ways and its grove of Daphne, or to Babylon with its villas, or to Chicago itself with its electric cars, it is clear that theirs will be the simplest part of it. Who will decide between the municipal systems of the rival economists? And who will be privileged to become the inhabitants of this blissful abode? A residence in Neopolis might be a reward for signal service to the State—a sort of *ante-mortem* beatification for just citizens. It would be better to be translated to Neopolis while living than to the Pantheon when dead. Every city in the future might have its Neopolis, and thus dispense with the old idea of a Heaven beyond the clouds. Men once tried a Tower of Babel; why not a rival Paradise? The idea leads us far—far! We shall watch for its realisation with awe.

IN MR. BELL SCOTT'S autobiography, which was published last week, there are some curious and charming letters of HOLMAN HUNT'S. They give a singular impression of the difficulties against which the pre-Raphaelite leader strove while painting his sacred pictures. Most of these difficulties he attributed to the evil one, "the Father of Mischief;" and in one letter he mentions, with perfect earnestness, an extraordinary incident which confirmed him in this view. He had gone to the studio on Christmas Day, a new idea having occurred to him for removing a twist that had come in the canvas, which was one of his troubles. He was entirely alone in the building, the other artists having studios being at home with their families. He was alone in that group of studios, "because of this terrible and doubtful struggle with the devil which one year before had brought me to the very portals of death," working with a candle held in his hand along with the palette. Would he be baffled again, as so often in like case at Jerusalem? He writes:—

"As I groaned over the thoughts of my pains . . . I gradually saw reason to think that it promised better, and I bent all my energies to advance my work to see what the later crucial touches would do. I hung back to look at my picture. I felt assured that I should succeed. I said to myself, half-aloud, 'I think I have beaten the devil!' and stepped down, when the whole building shook with a convulsion, seemingly behind my easel, as if a great creature were shaking itself and running between me and the door. I called out, 'What is it?' but there was no answer, and the noise ceased. I went to the door, which was locked as I had left it, and I noticed that there was no sign of human or other creature being about. I went back to my work really rather cheered by the grotesque suggestion that came into my mind that the commotion was the evil one departing. . . . Thus you see what a child I am!"

The whole thing is weird and mediæval and something heroic. An artist on the look out for a subject might do worse than give us HOLMAN HUNT in the deserted studio on Christmas night, a candle stuck in his palette, wrestling against heart-breaking obstacles, and triumphing over the fiend who, he believed, had put them in his path.

WE regret to learn that, owing to the state of his health, MR. LOUIS FAGAN is about to retire from the British Museum after a connection with that institution which has extended over nearly a quarter of a century. Every visitor to the Print-Room knows MR. FAGAN, and has had reason to be grateful to him for the unfailing courtesy with which he has ever been ready to place his own remarkable knowledge of prints and drawings at the service of all who cared to avail themselves of it. As the biographer of PANIZZI, MR. FAGAN has a special place of his own in the official hierarchy at the Museum, where his loss will be severely felt.

THE operation of the law of compensation can be detected everywhere almost at a glance; it works with curious effect in the times and seasons of the publishers, always providing something as a nine-days' wonder. About this time last year two notable novels were the sensation of the hour; this year, in the absence of any book specially remarkable for its contents, we have "the most beautiful book" DR. FURNIVALL ever saw: "the most beautiful book ever printed!" and the craft of the binder for the moment eclipses that of the writer. It has been remarked, regarding the exquisite productions of MR. MORRIS'S Kelmscott Press, and more especially in respect of this "most beautiful" reprint of CAXTON'S "Recueil of the Historyes of Troye," that a revolution has begun in English printing. This is possible; but we think it also possible that the revolution may take a different course from that which the prophets anticipate. MR. MORRIS himself was one of the initiators of the revolution long before the Kelmscott Press was heard of. The strict lines on which printing and binding are to develop in this country have not necessarily been laid down by MR. MORRIS, but the idea which inspires his work will, we take it, be widely propagated, and every author who aspires to be more than a mere bookmaker will concern himself with the vesture of his book. A year or two ago it was suggested that books might be produced like pictures, the original manuscript, stamped in every letter with the impress of the author's personality, becoming the property of one fortunate DIVES, while LAZARUS and his kin contented themselves with printed copies, as they do at present with engravings of paintings. In the coming Utopian era some plan of this kind may be arranged, although there may be a difficulty then in finding your LAZARUS—or your DIVES either, for that matter; but before these rare times arrive we may look for a period when the type, the paper, and the binding of a book will be as essentially a part of the author's work as the text. Already many writers, including MR. WILLIAM MORRIS, MR. OSCAR WILDE, and MR. WALTER CRANE, take care to make their individuality apparent in the outward raiment of their thoughts.

IF housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

THE question as to how far an author may control the form in which his book shall appear is hardly raised by OUIDA'S splenetic letter to *The Times*. We should say that fair-minded readers of that letter were all in MR. HEINEMANN'S favour before the appearance of his reply. OUIDA made a bargain with her eyes open, and regretting it for some cause or other, flung out hysterical aspersions against the dead and the living, and was very bitter indeed because MR. HEINEMANN, having the right to do so, elects to publish a book of hers in three volumes. Many people will wonder why it matters, apart from the price, in what form you sell chocolate cream—in bars, or balls.

WE seem unwittingly to have done an injustice to the *Athenæum*, for which we hasten to apologise. Referring to the fact that sixteen novels were reviewed in one article in that journal the other day, we spoke of the whole as being reviewed by one critic. This, however, is not the case. The criticisms of many writers were compressed into this one article. Happy the editor who can secure this homogeneousness on the part of his staff!

ART circles in Germany and Scandinavia have been much agitated by some recent extraordinary proceedings in the Berlin Artists' Society. The Norwegian painter, MUNCH, undoubtedly the most "advanced" of Scandinavian impressionists, had been invited to exhibit his pictures in the said society at the instance of the famous Munich painter, UHDE. MUNCH'S pictures have always called forth a very considerable amount of hostile criticism, although he of course has his supporters and admirers. In Berlin he did not by any means meet with a flattering reception—quite the contrary, in fact—and some of the older painters went so far as to call a general meeting of the society for the purpose of censuring the standing committee in connection with the exhibition, which was to be forthwith closed. This resolution was carried, in an extremely stormy meeting, by 120 votes against 105. Upon this result becoming known, half the members of the committee forthwith resigned, and some eighty members asked to have their names removed from the books of the society. The "old ones" have for their leader M. ANTON WERNER, Director of the Academy, but several of the older painters, including such a celebrity as LUDWIG KNAUS, were against the resolution.

THE last volume of the new edition of "Chambers's Encyclopædia" approaches completion. The ten volumes of this most compact of encyclopædias contain more than thirty thousand articles from nearly a thousand writers, many of the contributors being at the head of their departments of knowledge. Among the writers in the concluding volume are MR. STANLEY LANE-POOLE, MR. F. T. PALGRAVE, SIR WILFRID LAWSON, MR. HAMERTON, MR. VAMBÉRY, and MR. SAINTSBURY.

BOOKS on India increase in number rapidly. A "History of India from the Earliest Times to the Present Day" is being prepared by MR. H. G. KEENE.

A FOURTH volume has been edited by MR. J. P. WALLIS for the new series of "State Trials" (EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE). It will contain FROST'S trial for high treason, and the trials of FEARGUS O'CONNOR, THOMAS COOPER, and others during the troublous times between 1839-43. Non-political trials of interest included are those of MR. MOXON for publishing SHELLEY'S "Queen Mab," and of LORD CARDIGAN before the House of Lords for his duel with CAPTAIN TUCKETT.

OF the remarkable comets that have visited our system, that discovered by BIELA is of the greatest interest. In the year of discovery, 1826, it was computed to have an elliptic orbit with a period of revolution of six and a half years. The next returns to perihelion, or, in other words, the next nearest approaches to the sun, took place as predicted in 1832 and 1839, but in 1845, although following the same path, the comet was found to be divided into two portions, the distance between them, as estimated in 1852, being a million miles. Since this time the twin comets have never appeared as such, but when the earth on November 27th, 1872, passed through the point where her orbit intersected that of the comet, a brilliant display of shooting stars occurred. The same phenomena occurred in 1885, and the point from which the meteors appeared to radiate, or the radiant point, was situated in the constellation of Andromeda. These meteors were no doubt remnants of the comet, since both their times of appearance and direction of motion were the same; but astronomers are still ever on the look-out to pick up the comet if it should by any chance return again. The recent announcement of a very bright comet situated in Andromeda created greater interest than usual owing to its possibly being the long-looked-for return mentioned above, but a careful computation from accurate observations has shown that the elements of the new comet's orbit are quite different. *Labor omnia vincit.*

AMONG the deaths announced since our last issue are those of the VERY REV. MARSHAM ARGLES, Dean of Peterborough, who had taken a prominent part in promoting the restoration of the Cathedral, and contributed largely towards the expenses; COLONEL MARTIN PETRIE, a military writer of distinction; BARON JACQUES REINACH, cousin and father-in-law of M. JOSEPH REINACH, and an eminent financier, whose sudden death just now has intensified the excitement over the Panama prosecutions in Paris, and given rise to various unfounded calumnies; and M. DUMONT, once Bishop of Tournai in Belgium, whose enforced resignation, and subsequent implication in an alleged robbery from the Episcopal Treasury, gave rise to a considerable scandal in 1882 and 1883.

THE RESULT OF THE ITALIAN ELECTIONS.

FLORENCE, November 17th.

THE result of the elections has been that which we foretold in our previous article. The Ministry has obtained an enormous majority, and, what is more, its chief and most formidable adversaries have not been re-elected. The newspapers estimate at about sixty the number of Radical deputies, but among these some twenty at least are men who would gladly support the Government. The Socialists have had divers successes in the country districts. At Milan, however, where they hoped to secure the seat for one of their candidates, they were completely defeated. The Right has sustained great losses. The chief among them is that of Bonghi, and a grave loss too has befallen the party of Nicotera. After all this it would appear that the life of the Ministry is secured, but there remains a serious unknown element, at which I hinted in my previous article, and already the leading newspapers are talking of a coalition between Crispi and Zanardelli, and perhaps Di Rudinì, who shall take possession of power. I hold that for the present these rumours are premature.

The elections admit of no inference as to the political views that prevail throughout the country. Before all things there has been no true platform, no programme, either on the part of the Government or on the part of the Opposition. The Radical friends of the Government went about repeating that the Giolitti Ministry were crippled by

the Triple Alliance, which they had not renewed, and let it be understood that they would perchance not renew it when such renewal should again fall due. The Government on the one hand showed itself favourable to the Triple Alliance, on the other it manifested a keen desire to renew good relations with France, of which marked proof was given on the occasion of the Genoa fêtes.

Neither did the Opposition present a definite programme to the electors. While Colombo, the ex-Minister of Finance, who was the colleague of Di Rudinì in his Ministry, was proclaiming at Milan the necessity of reducing the military expenditure, and of carrying on a more pacific policy, Di Rudinì himself was putting forth a contrary opinion. Again: while Giolitti promised that the enormous Protectionist duty on rice should be definitely maintained, instead of being, as at present, merely provisional, his colleague Brin at Turin made Free Trade declarations which surprised all those who heard them. He estimated at some hundreds of millions the burden imposed on the country by Protection; and observed that there are some industries which receive by means of this Protection much more than what they pay in salaries to their workmen. So that if the scope of Protection be really to favour the national industries, a considerable sum would be saved by paying wages to the workmen and letting them live in idleness. And the Minister is right, but he recognises the truth a little late in the day. Already for the past two or three years political economists have been stating and restating this fact, and have published precise accounts to verify their statements. I myself published one some months ago in the *Journal des Économistes*, of Paris, from which it can be seen that Protection in the iron trade is the cause of great expense to the country, which rose to the large figure of £1,207,000 in 1890; and since the number of workmen engaged in this industry is 14,518, it follows that if this sum had been divided between them each would have had £83 a year, and instead statistics show that they only receive £36.

The abstentions have been numerous. The number of electors who in Italy go to vote is never very great. In the election of 1882 it was 60 per cent., in that of 1886 58 per cent., and in that of 1890 it was only 54 per cent. In the recent elections the voters were far fewer than in 1890. Partly this is due to the abstention of Clericals and Republicans; in a far greater degree to that of persons who are either quite indifferent, or who are disgusted with the corruption employed by the candidates, and by the pressure exercised by the present Government. Formerly, money played but a small part in the Italian elections, and it might be said that the buying of votes was quite exceptional. The statute book punishes bribery and corruption, but the law is hardly ever applied. On this occasion a number of ingenious methods were employed. In Italy we have paper money of the value of 4s. (5 lire); one candidate cut these in half, he gave one half to the elector and kept the other half himself, promising to give it to the man if he should be returned. The agents of another candidate accompanied the electors up to the door of the hall where the votes were taken, and gave to each a piece of blotting-paper, which he told him to place over the ballot-paper the moment he had written the name of the candidate, and then when he should hand back to him this piece of blotting-paper with the name of the candidate impressed on it, he should receive five or ten lire (4s. or 8s.). The banks and other companies which depend upon the Government provided large funds in order to meet these expenses.

The pressure exercised by the Government was such that even some of its friends saw themselves obliged to disapprove of it strongly. A great number of municipal councils were dissolved because they would not favour the official candidate. An amusing incident happened to the Marchese Berardi. This rich proprietor gave £20,000 for the construction of a boarding school at Ceccano, in the province of Rome, and every year he has spent further large sums for the keeping-up of the school. Up to the present it was generally recognised that everything went on well in the establishment, and Martini, the Minister of Public Instruction, had even promised to come and visit the school. But the Marchese Berardi would not lend himself to favour the Government candidate. So, in lieu of Martini, there appeared a Government inspector charged to make a report of the school and to overhaul it. The joke is that when this functionary arrived he found himself confronted with another Government inspector, who was presiding over an examining commission, and was bestowing great encomiums on the management of the school. But this time the enormous pressure of the Government did not obtain the desired result, and the Government candidate was not elected. At Agnani some persons condemned by the tribunals, and to whom the royal pardon had been denied, obtained it when a magistrate came to be the candidate for the district. Still, it would be very difficult to decide whether the Giolitti Ministry has really acted much worse than its predecessors. By these methods the Government always obtains a great majority in Italy, but the mischief is that it is never possible to learn what the country really thinks or desires, for honest electors refrain more and more from going to the poll. Meanwhile, the financial situation is growing worse, and this is the dangerous rock ahead on which the Giolitti Ministry may suffer shipwreck, if it has not been overthrown before by Signor Crispi.

VILFREDO PARETO.

THE DIVISION OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.

CONSTANTINOPLE, November 16th.

THE discussion of Prince Bismarck's most recent utterance in regard to the Eastern Question has brought out once more the idea that it may be possible for Austria and Russia to agree to an amicable division of the Balkan Peninsula between themselves—in which case England and Italy would be the only powers interested in the defence of Constantinople.

It is not strange that a cold-blooded, cynical egotist like Bismarck should be ready to sacrifice Constantinople—or anything else which does not belong to him—to establish his own work or carry out his own plans; but it is quite time that intelligent men who discuss this subject should rid their minds of this old, exploded notion that the Balkan Peninsula can be divided between Austria and Russia. It is a plan which was once seriously entertained and which at one time influenced European statesmen—especially Austrian statesmen; but it is no longer regarded as a possible solution of the Eastern Question by those who have any knowledge of the subject.

Russia in Constantinople means Russia in possession of Roumania, Bulgaria, and Macedonia. What could be more absurd than to suppose that Russia would consent to hold Constantinople as a city in the air, without any land communication? And land communication does not mean a road or a right of way, but the possession of the intervening territory, including the absolute control of the Danube.

A glance at the map will satisfy anyone that this involves the annexation of Roumania and Bulgaria and the territory between Bulgaria and Constantinople. But it was once supposed that Austria might agree to all this on condition of being allowed to annex that part of Turkey lying between the Rhodope Range and the Adriatic, including at least Macedonia and Albania, and giving her the important port of Salonica. I do not know whether this plan

ever found any favour at St. Petersburg, but I do know that it was once a favourite idea at Vienna and Berlin, and had the support of some distinguished statesmen. It was not openly repudiated by the Russians, and might be advanced by them even now to cover their real designs. But so far as I know it has not been suggested of late years by any influential Russian newspaper.

The plan is entirely impracticable for several reasons. First of all it is opposed to all the plans and theories of the Panslavists in Russia. They would never consent to it, and the Eastern Question is in their hands. They may not be strong enough to force the Czar to declare war against his will; but he is not strong enough to control their movements, and, so far as appears, he does not try to do so. At the present time their energies are chiefly devoted to Macedonia. It is true that the attempt they are now making to stir up trouble there is directed first of all against Bulgaria. They hope to get up an outbreak there which will rouse the sympathy of the Bulgarians and force the Government to assist the rebels, and thus come into collision with Turkey and the Triple Alliance, or to refuse aid and thus cause a revolution in Bulgaria.

But although this is the immediate object of their efforts, the ultimate object is to lead the Macedonians to look to Russia as their one true friend in the world, and thus prepare the way for final annexation.

They make no secret of their determination to bring all the Southern Slavs under the dominion of Russia. It is the destruction of the Austrian Empire and the emancipation of its Slavic population which they have in view, and nothing could be more foreign to their designs than the idea of extending Austrian rule over more Slavic people.

The second reason why this plan is impracticable is a geographical one. The only possible boundary between Russia in Bulgaria and Austria in Macedonia would be the present boundary between Bulgaria and Turkey. Servia would, of course, belong to Russia, and the new boundary would follow the Servian line to the Danube.

Between two friendly States this boundary might be satisfactory enough, but with Russia for a neighbour, this long, narrow arm stretched out to Salonica would be untenable. It would be at the mercy of Russia whenever she chose to pass over from Kustendie to Uskup. Its annexation would weaken rather than strengthen Austria. The cost of fortifying this long line would be enough to ruin the Empire.

But the ethnical objection to this plan is the decisive one, and that which more than any other has led to its abandonment. If Russia ever annexes Bulgaria and Servia, she will not only acquire Macedonia in addition, but she will absorb all the Southern Slavs and break up the Austrian Empire. There is no stopping-place. Macedonia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina are peopled by Slavs, and, treaty or no treaty, they would be under the control of Russia. Austria might build fortresses and fill the country with troops, but the Panslavists would give them no peace if they were located all along the border. What Montenegro always was to Turkey, those provinces would be to Austria, but on a grand scale.

The dream of Lord Beaconsfield, after the Berlin Congress, was to incorporate all European Turkey in the Austrian Empire, and thus create a second great Slavic Empire to rival Russia. One can conceive of the possible realisation of such a dream if the Central and Western Powers approved of it, but the division of the Southern Slavs between Austria and Russia is a dream which can never be realised under any possible conditions.

What is to become of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after the death of the present Emperor is one of the most serious questions now weighing upon Europe. Nothing can hold together its heterogeneous elements but outside pressure—especially the fear of Russia; and there is not the slightest probability that any Austrian or Hungarian statesman would now dream of adding to their present difficulties a co-partnership with Russia in the Balkan Peninsula. They realise fully that the advance of Russia to Constantinople means the destruction of their Empire, and their interest in the Triple Alliance is one of life or death. Their honest endeavours to strengthen and build up Bulgaria are not the outcome of pure benevolence—which is a rare virtue in any State, and especially in Austria—but of the conviction that Russia must be kept out of the Balkan Peninsula at any cost, and that the hope of doing this is bound up in the fate of Bulgaria.

It is no longer a question, then, of dividing Turkey with Russia, and consequently the utterance of Prince Bismarck as to Constantinople has roused no little excitement in Vienna. It means to them that he would not have hesitated to sacrifice the Austrian Empire to his own ends.

It is perhaps fortunate that he has expressed his opinion so strongly now, for it will make it very improbable that the present Emperor will look with favour upon any such idea; and it must reconcile even those who have admired the genius of Bismarck to his removal from office.

THE SECRET OF THE HEATHER ALE.

DOWN long Glenara, with its braggart river swaggering jauntily, noisily, and at large, past the young, impetuous, peat-browned hill-burns, four score and ten of Diarmid's red fellows clamoured. "By God, look at us! Are we not the splendid men altogether? It's fleas we'll put this day in the hose of the Glenshira folk!" Gilesbeg Gruamach had cried gleefully, as his followers straggled sleepily over to the brae in the dun morning, and Alister *piobaire's* nodding drones flung the defiant Gathering of the Clan far along the valley from Carnis to Cairnmhor, scaring the very eagles from the sombre steeps of Lecknamban. The coarse green philabegs flapped against brawny limbs, the brogued feet were as light on the path as the stag-slot. They flung themselves with rapid strides down Tighnafead brae, jesting, singing, shouting, their claymore scabbards rattling hollowly on wooden pike handles and bossy targes, for they started double armed. The Mackellars were stark men, and fought like badgers.

Erratic, without order, in knots of half a score, or in quieter quartettes, they poured down the path between the hills that had seen the same tumultuous passionate surge over and over again into far back years. On the height of the Hill of Parting, the women, new risen from the hot sides of their bairns, looked after them with pride that for a moment strangled the sorrow and misgiving, and the dogs barked querulously as they tugged at their ropes.

Of all the band there was none so eager for the fray as John-Without-Asking. He made short hot spurts on his brogue-tips along the path, or up the braeface, exuberant, tossing his target into the air, and grasping it dexterously as it whirled back, whistling, bawling snatches of Gaelic guttural.

"*Diaoul!* but the lad's fain, mighty fain!" said Gilesbeg Grimfaced to Shamus-Dol-Mairi, the oldest of the party, whose head was bald under his *crotal*-dyed broad bonnet with the bog-myrtle badge in it, and whose beard spread white on his chest, like the frothy mist of Lhinnegluiten's Fall. The old man looked under his bushy eyebrows, and shook his head.

"*Duine famanach*—foolish man!" he said. "A bad, bad sign it is to see one begin the day so terrible light-headed. If it was old Janet that was here, she would be saying that he was fey, and that if he was supple now, it would be stiff enough he might be before the crows went home. But I am not saying—God forbid!"

"*Droch bas ort!* It's only old wives' blethers that you have, Shamus. Put 'Baile Inneraora' on your pipes, Alister!" The march went swinging down the glen. The hours passed, the sun brought partridges clucking from the dark pine woods, the salt loch was skirted, the Garron was crossed, and belts were tightened, when the band had quenched the thirst of their hot march at Alt-an-Ailein.

The shock came at the Gap of the Grey Foal, beyond the Crooked Dyke. A score of the Mackellars ran forward in line, and rebounded from the solid weight of the Diarmids in mass. Some fell, hacked on the head with the heavy downward slash of the sword; some shrieked and clutched madly at the pikes that had deadly impact. One—Ivar-of-the-Oars—in the *bourach* stumbled on a tangled root of dry heather and fell forward with his stomach on the point of a Diarmid's dirk. The score, lacking half a dozen, leaped again on the advancing enemy, and for a time kept them at bay where the brogues slid uncertain on the slope of the knoll. It was rapid cut and drive, fierce plunge of dirk with the palm up, and long reach with the short black knife. The breath hissed through the clenched teeth, and the salt smell of blood was over the scent of the shuddering birch-leaves.

"*Bas, bas,* Diarmid!" gasped Calum Dhu, coming on the rear with the best of his force. There was but little room for the whirl of the basket hilt. "Mind Cregan Caorich!" yelled Gilesbeg, and the iron guard of his weapon driven out from the shoulder in the face of a Mackellar felled him like a steer. Then Gaelic imprecation ceased in the wild panting encounter, the shortened halberts hammered on the target hides, the tartan ripped as the struck one rolled on his side ere the dagger was withdrawn, the short grass felt greasy underfoot, but no one asked himself why it was so. A solitary mavis, undulating in the crimson of a slender rowan at the head of the gap, stopped short in the full abandon of his song to glance curiously down the path where there was the dissonance of battle.

There came a moment that seemed the very last for Calum Dhu.

Gilesbeg changed the claymore to the other hand, and parrying the blow of this old enemy, plucked the *skene-dhu* from his garter and, with a sinister snap of his teeth, lunged like a lightning fork under the guard of his opponent to pierce his side. A son's eye saw the intent ere it had become the act, and Cluny, at the left hand of his father, without a quiver of hesitation threw himself between. The little knife glanced off the buckle of his belt and sunk into his belly with a moist plunge, and the gore spurted out on the deer-horn haft.

"*Malloch ort!* Yon's for my brother, though I didn't mean it," whispered Gilesbeg. "Better it is that your father should last till we have the secret of the heather ale." And he guarded against the flail flight of opposing steel.

Cluny, a limp mass, rolled into a whin bush, whose thorns added to his death agony.

The sky grew clouded, a thin smirr of rain shed its almost impalpable haze on the scene, and still the fight went on. Inert clansmen, slowly stiffening, were scattered on the torn grass between the gap and Mackellar's house, on which the old man and the glensmen were being slowly but surely driven back. The retreat, dogged and painful, was an unconscious physical caving in on the part of the defenders, and Calum's back was against his own walls before he knew it, for the slaughter of Cluny blinded him, and he had been laying about him in a mist of fervour.

"The curse of Conan!" he yelled; "they're beating us, boys, *bas, bas,* Diarmid!" The scream tore through the Gap, and the Mackellars tried to echo it, and to clutch new hope and strength from its inspiration, but their split voices only gave husky, arid whispers. Yet they gathered their slacking muscles together on a new appeal, and for the last time, all that was left—a pitiful handful—Calum, Art, and Neilla, the Maam lads, the Drimlee lads, and two from Ceann-na-Coin, rushed in on the sons of Diarmid. It was the mad unreckoning of despair. There were a dozen dirks to one. In a moment there were left only the throbbing Calum and his two sons, the latter crimson from their own gashes and the wounds of others. They stood wearily, side by side, making heavy, futile, almost paralytic essays with their swords at the nearest foes. At last an impetuous rush of the Diarmids bore the three men down the path, and sent them crashing through the hut door in a crazy huddle among the peats.

"Surrender, and we'll spare your dirty lives," shouted Gilesbeg, as the three men sprung to bay and waited the onset.

Calum glanced wistfully at the foe before him. "To die in a house like a rat," he said simply, "were no great thing." He tossed his sword on the floor, and Art and Neilla did likewise.

In a moment the men were bound, and then they were led outside, where the scent of birch and heather and the pungent gall, with a new freshness borrowed from the passing shower, for a moment blotted out the agonised impression of the cruel scene around. Calum paused a second on the threshold, and glanced back on the dusky interior. He saw for the last time the bed where his wife had died, and the spinning wheel as she had left it, with the thread still on the teeth of the "heck." A spasm of pain went over his face at the sight of the keel marks on the door that in the happy days far off had made the record of the growth of The Little One.

"Give us all you know about the ale," peremptorily demanded Gilesbeg, wiping the blood from his knife on a tuft of grass.

Calum laughed in his face, and the sons said contemptuous things of the enemy that roused them.

"Aye! Ye may laugh," sneered the Grim-faced, clenching his fist against the jaw of Calum, "but it's a strange laugh ye'll have when we're done with you. It's not on your feet with the *biodag* you'll die like gentlemen, but you'll make crows'-meat at the foot of the Scaurnoch!"

Art grew pallid at the horror of the doom, but it did not shake the others.

"It's die we must, anyway," replied Calum coolly. Neilla whistled "Blar-na-leine" and ground his heel in the moss.

It was enough; the three men were thrust into a shed with a few men to guard them, while some of the rest sought the brewing cave, and others finished with fire the fearful work in the glen, or dealt with their dead. And in the afternoon there had been no secret yet learned, and the men marched for the Scaurnoch with the prisoners before them.

They were jeered at, they were prodded at with knives, they had the essence of obloquy poured on them as they wearily dragged to the mouth of the glen, and up through the Strongara to the bosky shoulder of Dun-i-Corval, and the Dun beyond. The woods were full of animal life that seemed happy enough, but the crackling leaves lay thick on the ground, and the wind had the chill menace of coming winter.

Calum, thick-set, light of foot, trod the hunting-path lightly, Neilla strode with long steps, carelessly, Art slouched along, downcast, sickly-looking. Now and then his father glanced at him with lowering eyes, or nudged his arm with significance.

The wood opened, the hunting-path bent at a right angle, to give a level pause that the eye might catch the vision spread below.

Loch Finne stretched far from Cairndhu to French Foreland in the pensive evening, a glassy plain, with the little waves levelled by the distance into the general flatness. One brown lug-sail lay off the Sheep rocks.

Calum Dhu tossed his head to send the tangled hair from his eyes and glanced at what was below. The Scaurnoch fell sheer two hundred feet from where he stood. He spat contemptuously over the edge of the cliff which the jostle of an inch from the Diarmid

beside him would send him sprawling over, a helpless doomed spread of limbs, to startle the ravens that swung on gloomy pinions below. The sun, lost behind the Dun, lent a floating glory to the Cowal Hills; great clouds wheeled down from Hell's Glen. Ben Ime was set about with silky mists; where the hills across the loch joined the water the black belt broadened.

For a brief space the men stayed their cruel work to gaze and listen. From the brown shore at the foot of the hill came the unutterable sadness of a curlew's call.

"Let us hurry up, lads, or it's not Carnis we'll see this night," at last said Gilesbeg, impatient.

Then, turning to the oldest of the three prisoners, he asked anew for the secret.

Calum Dhu smiled with set teeth; and Neilla shook his head.

"Come, come, if we have not got it before the sun's off Shian Sluidh yonder, it's to hell with you over there!" And he pointed significantly at the purple depths that fell far off below his feet, ceasing in pine top or jagged rock.

Calum shrugged his shoulders, and with a voice that knew no tremor, replied "If it was *ifrinn* itself, and the devil was Gilesbeg Gruamach, I would not save my soul at the cost of the secret!"

"Look yonder, the Shian Sluidh's getting black, and anyone of you can save the three. I say so on the cross of my knife."

John-Without-Asking, an eloquent gash on his pallid face, stood behind the prisoners, to give them to the depths, but the sunlight seemed to linger on the fairy knoll in pity.

Art's mouth quivered; he glanced recklessly at his sire, and would have spoken, when Calum catching the wavering meaning of it, hastily stepped back from the edge of the cliff, and addressed his enemy.

"It is a poor secret at any rate," he said; "and if it is to save my life, you can have it."

Neilla looked incredulously in his father's face; it was white and drawn. John-Without-Asking let a sigh of regret escape him.

"I thought you would tell it," sneered Gilesbeg; "there was never a Mackellar yet but had a tight grip of his little life."

Mackellar winced under the taunt, and bit at his beard. "Yes, but it's only on one condition I'll tell you the secret. It is my secret alone, and I can never look a clansman in the face after telling it. Art and Neilla there you must send over the rock first, that they cannot tell of their father's disgrace."

Art groaned in anguish, but Neilla, who had in the days gone by been on the hills and moors alone with his father for weeks, knew that heart, and turned his face to hide the exultation of his wild surmise.

Gilesbeg laughed. "Faith, that's easy enough!" and he signalled to John-Without-Asking.

A sudden thrust at the sons who were bound together hurled them through the dizzy air to the horrid death below. The Diarmids, poised on the edge, tried to follow the flight of the doomed brothers, but it was over in a moment, and on the wind there was not the slightest sound from the gloom beneath except that a jackdaw screamed.

"Now, we'll take you to Carnis, and you'll make us the ale, the fine ale, the cream of rich ale," said Gilesbeg, and he cut the thongs that bound the Mackellar's arms to his side.

With a triumphant laugh Calum stood back from his foes.

"Ha, ha! crooked-mouthed Diarmids, blind Diarmids, sons of *Striopachan*, did you think it?" he cried, with mockery in his mien and tone. "Come with me and my braw sons and you'll get ale, aye and the black wine of Death at the foot of Scaurnoch." He clutched quickly, firmly, unexpectedly, at the executioner of his children, and with one sudden jerk he had John-Without-Asking with him in mid-air, over the rock-face, clutching, writhing, screaming in despair!

The horror of it, the Celtic splendour of it, struck the Diarmids dumb. Gilesbeg lifted his eyes from the airy depths, and breaking the silence, said, with the sneer from his face, "Yon thing had the heart of a man!"

Night fell fast, a bittern wailed beyond the larches, the swelling wind sent a tremulous coronach in monotone through the gloaming. Across the sobbing tide the Cowal hills were levelled and lost. Night birds screamed derisively behind the Diarmids, as with uncertain feet in the gloom they sought the mountain foot, and without pipe-march or sound of any kind save a weary Gaelic undertone, slouched to their distant home.

NEIL MUNRO.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

LIBERAL APATHY.

SIR,—I have read Mr. Shepherd's letter in your last number on the neglect of the Liberal headquarter staff to provide orators for the contest in South Westmoreland, and I should like to say a few words on the other side.

Not long ago the Speaker (I mean Mr. Peel, not you, Mr. Editor), in an excellent speech addressed to his constituents, lamented the present practice of introducing strangers to support Parliamentary candidates, and reminded his audience of the good old times when constituencies resented the interference of outsiders, and when ladies took no part in elections. I have always held the belief that it is far better for any Liberal Association to trust to its own resources than to import orators from the outside. It is, in the first place, very important that a statement of the candidate's opinions from his own mouth should be the main business of every meeting, that the electors should have full opportunity of heckling him, and that an inefficient candidate should not be allowed to cover his shortcomings by the eloquence of others. In the next place, it is most unfair that popular speakers should be overworked by being dragged to all parts of the United Kingdom in order to support candidates of whom they know little, and to address audiences of which they know nothing, while their Parliamentary, and sometimes even their official, duties are neglected. And, lastly, I believe that the electors themselves prefer to listen to those whom they know and can trust.

We commenced our campaign in the South-Eastern or Woolbridge Division of Suffolk in the middle of last March, and we then determined that we would manage our meetings ourselves, without asking help from the outside; and that two local speakers, but not more, should accompany the Liberal candidate on each occasion. Before the polling day we gave every voter—in a large and scattered agricultural constituency—full opportunity of listening to our present member. During some seventy meetings not a single speaker appeared on our platforms who was not actually a resident in the South-Eastern Division of Suffolk. The result was that we not only turned out the Conservative member, but that, whereas in 1885 we were decidedly the least Liberal of the five divisions of the county, in 1892 we came in a good second, having improved 1,051 votes on 1886, and 570 votes on 1885. Most of the East Anglian constituencies in which we did well were, as I understand, worked much on the same lines; whereas in those divisions which were well supplied with Liberal speakers from the outside we suffered the severest defeats.

I acknowledge that we had a splendid candidate and a first-rate agent, but I think that our victory was also due to our having followed the advice of Mr. Peel, our speakers being all men well known in the constituency, and no lady having taken part in the contest; while the late member perhaps partly owes his defeat to his having enlisted strangers and ladies on his side. I hope that this short narrative of our experience may induce South Westmoreland and other constituencies to be a little less modest, and to trust to their unaided exertions rather than to extraneous assistance.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

November 22nd, 1892. W. BRAMPTON GURDON.

MR. IRVING'S KING LEAR.

SIR,—It seems to me that "A. B. W.," whose criticisms I generally read with unalloyed pleasure, has been a little unfair to Mr. Irving in his article on *King Lear*. I am entirely with your critic in what he has to say with regard to the play itself; but why blame Mr. Irving for that which, if it be a fault at all, is Shakespeare's fault, not his? The play may be too great, too terrible, too tragical to be adequately represented by anybody. I am somewhat inclined to think that it is, and that the stage has never yet witnessed an absolutely satisfactory performance of *King Lear*. But is Mr. Irving's Lear entitled to be regarded as a success or a failure? Whether one be a professional critic or

a mere spectator, that question can only be answered by the impression produced upon one's own mind by the representation. I was at the Lyceum on the first night of *King Lear*, and, unlike your critic, I brought away from the performance a distinct impression not of the scenery, beautiful though it was, but of Lear himself. The mad scenes, especially that upon the heath, made me feel that I was in the presence of a real artist, who had so thoroughly mastered the outward signs of the mental aberration from which Lear suffers that he could perform his part in a way which would have satisfied a Master in Lunacy, at all events, if not a dramatic critic. Of the force and beauty of the recognition and death scenes I need not speak, as your critic himself has done full justice to them in another quarter. But what seemed to me to be Mr. Irving's greatest triumph—judging always by the impression produced upon myself—was to be found in the fact that, after the witnessing the play I felt that I knew Lear better and understood him more thoroughly than I had ever done before. By a hundred subtle and noble touches Mr. Irving succeeded in bringing before me a living Lear whose character no longer baffled my attempts to grasp it. Perhaps he merely suggested the secret of the demented king whom no actor, living or dead, has ever yet fully portrayed. But even to have done only this is surely to have achieved a triumph, and one of no mean order.

May I add one word in conclusion? Mr. Irving has so long been the acknowledged leader in our English school of acting that it is, perhaps, not surprising that the critics should have grown tired of praising, and that they should be more anxious now to discover the imperfections which only the acute can perceive than to dwell upon the excellencies which all know and appreciate. But is not this to allow criticism to degenerate into hypercriticism?—Yours truly,

FIRSTNIGHTER.

MR. BURNE-JONES AND THE ACADEMY.

SIR,—It has always been my rule not to enter into argument with my critics, but in the instance of "R. I." I find myself obliged to break my rule. "R. I." thinks that the mistake I slipped into regarding Mr. Burne-Jones's election as an Associate vitiates the argument which he says I propound with vigour. I, on the contrary, think that the fact that Mr. Burne-Jones was elected as an Associate before he had exhibited in the Royal Academy strengthens my argument. The facts now stand as follows:—For twenty years, possibly for more, Mr. Burne-Jones was a resolute opponent of the Royal Academy, as resolute, though not so truculent, an opponent as Mr. Whistler. When he became a popular painter Mr. Agnew gave him a commission of fifteen thousand pounds—the largest, I believe, ever given—to paint four pictures, the "Briar Rose" series. Some time after—before he has exhibited in the Academy—Mr. Jones is elected as an Associate, and, in return for the honour done him, he sends one picture, as we leave a card on people whom we have always cut, but who, nevertheless, have the bad taste to press their hospitality upon us. Is Mr. Jones the only instance of a man being elected to the Academy who had never exhibited there? Perhaps "R. I." will tell us. I do not know, and have not time to hunt up records.

G. M.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE,
Friday, November 25th, 1892.

AS everybody knows, an English boy nowadays can pass through a public school training, take at his university a first class in the humanities, and afterwards become a respectable country clergyman, without having written a Greek iambic or Latin hexameter in the whole course of his life. It is much too late to protest. By this time the writing of Latin and Greek verse as a literary recreation is very nearly obsolete, and I have merely to note here, as coming under my own observation, one of the results of its obsolescence.

The country clergyman who used, in Herbert's pleasant phrase, to "relish versing," has lost this relish, and now writes novels. Mr. Andrew Lang, a little while back, attempted an estimate of the number of novels that annually float in manuscript about this country, and his figures, though likely enough within the mark, appalled the lay imagination. I think it would stagger the public a deal more to learn the percentage of these MSS. that comes from vicarage-houses. The few country squires who used to carry away from Oxford or Cambridge a taste for literary exercises—the old gentlemen in blue bird's-eye neckcloths who liked to read in Livy before dinner—are either dead or occupied from morning to night with the cares of their estates: since to be a landlord in these times is to be a working man. Extinct, too, or almost extinct, is the semi-scientific clergyman—heir in spirit of the *dilettanti* who founded the Royal Society in Wadham College. He used to potter on his vicarage roof with a telescope; but science has outgrown him. It has become a matter for specialists, and on many grounds a daunting pursuit for clerks of the Established Church. It remains possible to compile a Parochial History; but, thanks to the German notions now adopted and proclaimed as the only truth at our two great universities, such a compilation must be a product neither of taste nor intelligence. There is nothing left for a man of moderate culture but to write a novel.

Now this seems a pity: for novel-writing is of all kinds of art the most lawless, or, if this be denied, at least we may say that its rules have never been reduced to a system. And a man of moderate culture, if he have not an instinct for the work, is bound to lose his way and write rubbish. On the other hand, the same man, applying the regimen of prosody and the rules of taste once taught at school and college, might produce Greek, Latin, or English verse at once fairly elegant in itself and pleasing to the writer and his friends: since skill to produce implies skill to enjoy. In other words, the versifying amateur is an amiable figure, while the novel-writing amateur is in most cases contemptible.

To be mediocre in verse is not necessarily to be hateful. Horace's line makes an excellent rule for the poet; but the critic may well abate something of its demand. For instance, I once came across a copy of verses by an amateur that I would not barter for Gray's "Elegy." I know the "Elegy" to be great verse, and to some extent I know why it is great. Tennyson would rather have written it, he confessed, than any other short poem in the language. And yet—it is merely a matter of temperament—I get more pleasure from the stuff I am about to quote.

Its author was a Sir Richard Grenville, grandfather of that namesake who fought the *Revenge* off Flores in the Azores, and now lives in immortal verse. Our Sir Richard, who died in 1550, was Sheriff of Devon and Marshal of Calais, a man who (according to Carew) "enterlaced his home magistracy with martiall employments abroad," and could in the intervals of both disport himself in brave verse, as follows:—

IN PRAISE OF SEAFARING MEN IN HOPES OF GOOD FORTUNE.

Who seeks the way to win Renown,
Or flies with wings of ye Desire,
Who seeks to wear the Laurel crown,
Or hath the mind that would aspire,
Tell him his native soil eschew,
Tell him go range and seek anew.

Each haughty heart is well content
With every chance that shall betide;
No hap can hinder his intent,
He stedfast stands though Fortune slide.
The sun, quoth he, doth shine as well
Abroad as erst where I did dwell.

In change of streams each fish can live,
Each fowl content with every air;
So haughty hearts can ne'er be still
And not be drown'd in deep despair;
Wherefore I judge all lands alike
To haughty hearts who fortune seek.

To pass the seas some think a toil,
Some think it strange abroad to roam,
Some think it grief to leave their soil,
Their parents, kinsfolk and their home.
Think so who list, I like it not:
I must abroad to try my lot.

Who lists at home at cart to drudge
And cark and care for worldly trish,
With buckled sheaves let him go trudge,
Instead of laurel a whip to slish!
A mind as base his hind will show,
Of carrion sweet to feed a crow,

If fashion of that mind had been
The Grecians when they came to Troy,
Had never so the Trojans fought,
Nor ne'er been put to such annoy.
Wherefore, who lust go live at home;
To purchase fame I will go roam.

I know this (I say) to be poorish stuff, yet would not change it for many a masterpiece, and count it a thousand pities that the fashion of writing its like has died out among country gentlemen of fair education. It is foredoomed to a better success than the writing of novels, because it has rules, and rules that a modest intelligence can grasp—as J.K.S. has hinted in his "Ballade of the Incompetent Ballade-Monger":—

"I am not ambitious at all:
I am not a poet, I know
(Though I do love to see a mere scrawl
To order and symmetry grow).
My muse is uncertain and slow,
I am not expert with my tools,
I lack the poetic *argot*;
But I hope I have kept to the rules."

It will be objected that in all this I take an ornamental view of letters and of university training; and this may be cheerfully admitted. I for one am unable to conceive of literature except as an ornament and delight of life—a thing essentially joyous and pleasurable, though it deal with tragic material; or to respect an university training that does not aim to produce, before all things, a certain quality of mind and manners—a choiceness of understanding, if the term may be used without suspicion of priggishness. Certainly it were better to incur this suspicion than to acquiesce in that hatred of art and letters, and all things tending for culture, which now rules the counsels of the University of Oxford, where the study of the classics has become a mixture of philological hypotheses and panting archæological research; where contempt of literature is the first article in the historian's creed; where every few months a new school is invented or an old one readjusted to encourage "getting on in the world"; and where report says—it may be untrue, but that it should even be spread is condemnation enough—that Mr. Cecil Rhodes has been offered the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, *honoris causâ*, the honour presumably being that he *has* "got on in the world."

A. T. Q. C.

REVIEWS.

JOHN RICHARD GREEN.

A Short History of the English People. By J. R. Green, M.A. Illustrated edition. Edited by Mrs. J. R. Green and Miss Kate Norgate. Vol. I. London: Macmillan & Co.

IT happened long ago that the writer of these lines gave lectures on English History to the labourers of a Midland village. Taking Green's book, then lately published, as his guide, he tried to illumine his discourse by pictures: rough coloured drawings of the priest, noble, yeoman, hind, of each period as it passed under review; portraits of Beket, Chaucer, Wyclif, Caxton; copies of the Bayeux tapestry and of Magna Charta; plans of Creçy and Evesham; drawings of Kit's Coty House, Columba's Psaltercase, Alfred's jewel, the Pusey horn, the Wykeham crozier; of Friar Bacon's study, Iffley Church, the Bocardo, Windsor Castle. The great success of the attempt, the excited curiosity and prompt assimilation of the crowded rustics who thronged the schoolroom benches, keenly enforced upon his mind the want sustained by the undecorated baldness of the book itself, the hope that it might some day be reproduced not only with accessories of bibliographic splendour, but with current illustrations from the vast repositories, accessible to historian and antiquary, but unfamiliar to the mass of readers. This has now been done by Mrs. Green: a rich tribute to her husband's memory, a revelation of her own worth and competence as wife and help-meet to a great historian. The illustrations, more than three hundred in number, form an indirect but graphic commentary on the text. We have costumes and implements of daily life; the mail-coats, carved horns, rude ships of the fifth century invaders, the combs and buckles, necklaces and fibulæ of their women, their spoons, glass vessels, coins. As the centuries pass and the settlement is complete, we see their carts, ploughs, windmills; their serfs and artisans at work, bakers, vintners, cooks, ironworkers, amid the surroundings of their craft. Women spin and weave, musicians play upon harp, drum, virginal; morris-dancers caper, children catch butterflies or sit in school, warriors charge in combat or in tournament, kings grant charters or administer justice; the Englishmen and women of Chaucer live and move in the quaint presentment of the Ellesmere manuscript. The art of each successive period shines out in metal work and pottery, moot-horn and chessman, jewelled book-shrine and coloured missal painting; in Great Seals of kings, bishops, towns, gilds; in tomb effigies and brasses, initials from the Book of Kells, the Gospel-books of Augustine and of Lindisfarne, the Alcuin Bible and the Loutrell Psalter; drawings authentic or questionable from the hands of Bæda, Dunstan, Matthew Paris. Architecture, religious and domestic, rises from the Irish Ogham Stones through Caen and Jumièges, through Arques and Castle Gaillard, to Thornton Abbey, Mayfield Hall, and Glastonbury Lady Chapel. Ebbsfleet and Richborough, Lewes and Carlaverock, Stirling and Berwick, stamp the scenes of great crises in our history; the successive English overlordships, the range of Angevin dominion, London in the ninth and thirteenth centuries, the Oxford of Macarius, the Wales of Gruffyd, the Scotland of William the Lion, the France of Philip the Fair, are made clear by maps and plans. A collection so varied and complete of all that pictorial art can do in preservation and reproduction of young England during its nine centuries of childhood and adolescence has never yet been brought together, much less wedded to written history.

The "Short History" was published in 1874. To understand its effect on the teaching of our schools we should study the earlier papers of the Oxford Local Examination, which began ten years before. Their English History opened with the Conqueror; the teacher crammed his boys to master it by the aid of "outlines"—"dem'd outlines" for the most part, Mr. Mantalini might appropriately have called them—arranged under five heads. First came the Kings and Queens from William to Victoria, with dates, and careful genealogies of the three aberrant successions. Secondly, the battles, including dates, leaders, results. Thirdly, "Events," such as the White Ship, the Black Death, the Welsh Bards, the Babes in the Tower, the Gunpowder Plot, the Seven Bishops. Fourthly, Eminent Persons, with such evidence of their greatness as could be compressed into four lines of manuscript. Fifthly, as a counsel of perfection where Honours were desiderated, a dozen or so of miscellaneous isolations not rangeable under the four heads indicated; Scutage, the Constitutions of Clarendon, the Great Charter, the Statute of Provisors, Præmunire, the Six Articles, the Petition of Rights—carefully electuarised into mental pills, not for digestion, but, as examiners of that date can testify, for reproduction on paper in words faithfully identical. Suddenly the whole character of the papers changed: kings became dynastically insignificant, "events" were no longer marketable, men took rank as expository of measures, indecisive battles disappeared; in their stead came questions on the Assize of Clarendon, the pre-Chaucerian literature, the Friars, the Statute of Winchester, the Provisions of Oxford, the Merchant gilds and Craft gilds, the Lollards and the Peasant Revolt, the New Monarchy, the Renaissance; for Green's History had appeared, and examiners had read it.

As we glance to-day over the familiar pages, with their masterly analysis, their dramatic grouping,

their condensed knowledge, impartial accuracy, vivacious, buoyant handling—and remember sadly that the conceiving brain and executing hand no longer delineate or scheme—reverence takes the place of criticism, and the reviewer passes into the showman. We notice first the sympathetic dexterity which penetrates through kingly narratives and priestly squabbles to the "Story of the People" which they embedded. The Old Testament Kings and Chronicles are not more exclusively clerical and regal in their tone than the Historia Ecclesiastica and the Acta Sanctorum; but Mr. Green contrives to disinter from these the popular legend and the survival phrase which tell of ceorl and mark, of blood-wite and of folk-moot, and to piece them into the village community of pre-Norman days: the quaint titles of ancient streets, the annals of husting and ale feast and ward and gild, the curious tales of Farmer Ketel and of Nicholas the son of Acon, build up for him the emancipation of the borough towns: round Dante's verse and Giotto's frescoes, round Alsatia by the Temple slums of early London, round the Grey Friars whose name still lingers in the back-streets of Oxford, gather the rise and the potency of Franciscan, Dominican, and Carmelite revivals: his brilliant reproduction of the great Thirteenth Century University, its Norman towers and its Beaumont Palace, its stately town church of St. Martin and mitred abbey of Osney, its thousands of quarrelsome, ragged students swarming in the bare lodging-houses of its mean and filthy lanes, yet alive with intellectual rivalry and passionate thirst for knowledge, reflect the days when, as a solitary, observant boy, he shaped for himself out of Mercian Frideswide's Chapel and Italian Grimbald's crypt, out of New College Wall and Logic Lane, Magdalen Walks and Marston Road, May-day flower feast and St. Giles' fair, the model mediæval town, obsolete and strange in those days to contemporary historian and antiquary, but discerned by the inspired eyes of the lonely genius brooding in their midst. Note, too, the resolving clearness with which complicated social or constitutional revolution—the decay of early democratic freedom, the achievement of Roman spiritual headship, the legislation of the second Henry and the first Edward, the growth of the Commons House—are summarised and simplified, traced from their unsuspected sources, massed round central personalities or facts, crystallised finally into some ringing and adhesive epigram. "Conquest begat the king." "The chant was the dirge not of Cuthbert only, but of Cuthbert's church and people." Ælfred created English literature." "The reign of Henry II. initiated the rule of Law." "It is to the victory of Bouvines that England owes her Great Charter." "With the reign of Edward begins modern England." Nor are the dramatic incidents and the master-figures of each movement dwarfed by the new prominence assigned to popular growth and greatness. Above it tower the forms of Bæda, Ælfred, Dunstan, of Cnut, William, Fulk the Black, of Earl Simon, Roger Bacon, Edmund Rich; while the stream of narrative ever and anon stands still, that we may fix our gaze on Hastings, Runnymede, Bannockburn, or Crécy.

The book was written in blood. From his wife's too short biographic preface we learn the struggles of his literary life: books purchased by the sacrifice of meals, hours for historical research saved from exacting daily toil, the great work at last begun amid leisure due to what seemed mortal sickness, continued under physical suffering and exhausting poverty, under the loneliness of discouragement from valued friends who distrusted his conception of history and foretold its failure, finished at the last by a miracle of resolution and endurance. Then came the brilliant brief reward: immediate recognition, generous welcome, unexpected popularity, to cheer the crippled residue of a life worn out before its time.

One volume alone is published; two more will apparently follow. That Mrs. Green, with her able coadjutor, Miss Norgate, may speedily complete her husband's monument, and fill up the measure of our gratitude, is an aspiration which will be echoed resoundingly by all "English People."

A DREAMER OF THE COUNTING-HOUSE.

GOVERNMENT. By J. N. McArthur. London: Longmans, Green & Co. Melbourne: Melville, Mullen & Slade.

IT is impossible not to feel somewhat alarmed when a British man of business begins a book of 120 pages with the words, "I here propose to formulate a system of government which I conceive to be based, as nearly as I can judge, upon first and true principles." In France they have become accustomed to first principles, but a Rousseau of Leadenhall Street is a startling novelty. One has not to read far, however, to learn that there is more of Leadenhall Street than of Rousseau about Mr. McArthur. "First principles" with him mean "business principles," and he looks upon the State as a big joint-stock company. He does not seem to care about history, or to have any great amount of respect for established institutions. The world, in his view, starts free from debt or other association with the past, and men are so many equal items on the credit side of the ledger. But even on this pleasant hypothesis he cannot conduct us far into the realms of fancy, and leaves us with an ideal which is not much in advance of the Newcastle Programme. Mr. McArthur recommends universal suffrage, with open voting and proportional representation on Hare's system; one legislative chamber, re-elected by batches and containing not more than one hundred members; payment of the expenses of members, but not of salaries for their work, and a wide extension of the federal principle, or what is known as "Home Rule all round." He has nothing to say about any of these proposals which has not been said many times before; and it is reassuring to find that "first principles," in the British sense, do not lead to any startling disintegration of society.

The most refreshing thing in Mr. McArthur's book is the method he took to study existing politics. He left aside Republics and Monarchies, which are too complicated and too much alike, and observed "the committees, or governing bodies, of various small societies, cricket clubs, race clubs, mechanics' institutes, small joint-stock companies, and such like." An indefinite vista is opened up to the student of comparative politics with a very small expenditure of time and money. He can study the constitution of the cricket club of Little Peddlington instead of the manners of the South Sea Islanders. Instead of following the proceedings of the Landesgemeinden of Uri and Appenzell in a dialect he imperfectly understands, he can talk to Mr. James Lowther about the management of the Jockey Club, which has trained more statesmen than even the Town Council of Birmingham. The modern Aristotle will have no difficulty in observing more polities than were noticed even by the author of the "Politics;" and, after all, the constitution of Lord's is quite as important as that of some paltry town in Ancient Greece. As Mr. McArthur remarks, it will be possible to use "on this smaller scale the method of experiment, even though no nation will allow itself to be experimented upon for the mere purpose of experiment." The scientific squire must treat his village institute much as Sir John Lubbock treated his ants. The company draughtsman in large practice must not lose sight of the fact that he is the greatest living maker of constitutions. Many moral lessons as to Imperial Federation could be learnt by comparing the record as amalgamators of the unsuccessful Mr. Bottomley and the successful Mr. Rhodes. Mr. McArthur has opened up a new field for the inductive method in political science, if he has been unable to go very far in it himself. The one real novelty he suggests is the abolition of the Cabinet Minister as a useless intermediary between

Parliament and the permanent officials. This surely was not learnt in the City. The director is the Cabinet Minister of the company, and what would companies do without their directors? Or what would directors do without their companies?

THE NEW BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE JEWISH CHURCH. A Course of Lectures on Biblical Criticism by W. Robertson Smith. Second Edition, revised and much enlarged. London and Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black.

THE delivery of these brilliant lectures dated a new epoch in the Biblical scholarship of our country. They were the first popular exposition of the new criticism, and an appeal on its behalf from ecclesiastical powers to the religious public of the country. The controversy of the four preceding years had prepared an audience for them; it had trained their author to an unusual skill in the argument of his case; and its temporary issue—his own suspension from teaching, on the mere grounds of expediency, a few months after a favourable vote on the case itself—had left him with the not unjust consciousness of martyrdom for a winning cause. The lectures accordingly have a character unique in their domain, in which since Ewald bare scholarship had not been relieved, except by the spurious picturesqueness of Renan, and the sometimes flippant humour of Wellhausen. Full of science closely argued from point to point, Professor Smith's lectures were directly addressed to the conscience and common-sense of the average religious man, and were aglow with the zeal of one who felt that he was contending for a more honest and spiritual form of religion than that which for the moment had obtained a personal victory over him. Professor Smith argued from the basis of the principles of the Reformation, and in the interest of an evangelical faith. His appeal was to Christian men, who stood by Paul's Gospel of Christ and Paul's way of looking at the Old Testament; and the conviction he sought to put into them was that the new criticism was more consistent with both Christ's and Paul's testimony than the traditional theories could possibly be made to seem. The main instinct of the lectures was religious: "it is more important to understand the method of God's grace in Israel than to settle when a particular book was written."

Now the effect of all this was immediate and sustained. During the last twelve years no book of its class has had a wider or healthier influence, whether in training our younger generation of Biblical scholars, or in preparing an intelligent and sympathetic public for their results. Students could not possibly have a better introduction to method; a stronger stimulus to labour and courage in research; or a finer example of reverence and the devotion of scholarship to the ends of practical religion.

But that Professor Smith does not yet feel the victory won is proved by nearly every page of this new edition. Not only have the large additions been written with the energy and direct address of the original lectures, but the author has everywhere striven to multiply his proofs and to make his old explanations more lucid and convincing. There is one new passage, in which Professor Smith comes to even closer quarters with the conservative school than he did in the previous edition. It is *à propos* of their acquiescence in tradition, because they allege that internal evidence as to the trustworthiness of Hebrew text is uncertain and delusive:—

> "This is convenient counsel, and appeals to the indolence that forms a part of every man's nature. . . . I leave it to the consciences of those dignitaries and leaders of the English and Scottish Churches who have refused, and still refuse, to study the modern criticism, to determine whether their lofty indifference to matters that have been to every diligent student of the Scriptures the cause of great searchings of the heart is, indeed, a fruit of surer faith and truer insight than is given to those who bear the burden and heat of the day in the field of Biblical study. . . . You propose (do you?) to acquiesce in the received tradition and to ask no questions as to the history of Biblical books beyond the point for which you have a direct witness in the divergence of the Greek and Hebrew texts. That would be very well if the comparison of these texts had taught you that, as far back as the third century before Christ, editors and copyists had scrupulously abstained from touching a letter of the books they received as holy. But we have learned the very opposite of this. We know that changes were made as far back as we can follow the history of the text by external evidence. To shut our eyes to the probability that similar changes were made before that time, and to do this under the name of faith, is to confound faith with agnosticism."

This appeal occurs in connection with what is really the only very great change in the Church's attitude to Scripture which the results of the new criticism render necessary. In discussing the history of the Canon, Professor Smith has striven to show that certain books of the Old Testament, including Chronicles, were in the time of our Lord of disputed authority, and that they did not receive His sanction. The argument is not by any means conclusive, but when we turn to Professor Smith's analysis of the historical books we find something that makes it natural for not only Professor Smith, but all Christians, to wish to be relieved from the obligation of regarding the whole Old Testament Canon as of equal authority. In that analysis Professor Smith shows that the historical books of the Old Testament are compilations from various, and sometimes differing, sources. To the mass of the earlier histories—Judges to Kings—he practically grants the value of contemporary evidence; but he seeks to show that belief in this is not consistent with belief in the much later record of Chronicles. He produces a long array of facts in support of his contention, and comes to the conclusion that Chronicles is almost wholly in the style of the later Jewish commentary and preaching upon earlier Scripture—part romance, part mere moralising. What most vividly occurs to one on reading this argument is that, clearly as its evidence and conclusion was displayed in the first edition, there has never been any answer to it from the conservative side, and especially that the Church, which condemned the reasoner, has never given any formal deliverance upon the reasoning, though it so directly traverses her definite creed. She silenced Professor Smith as a teacher in her schools, but then she remained silent herself. And now Professor Smith re-states his case against Chronicles with greater detail and precision than before.

But perhaps the most striking thing about this manifesto of the new criticism is that, when you except the point we have just been noticing, there is nothing else in its doctrine which traverses any essential doctrine of the Church. There are some very radical changes proposed in the traditional conception of the history of Israel and the authorship of the Scriptures. Take the two largest. We are told that it is impossible to ascribe with certainty any Psalm to David, and from Moses is taken away all but a fragment of the Law. But with regard to the former, what of true faith can be harmed by the removal of some pieces from the events to which, in the acknowledgment of all, they have been incongruously applied by their titles, to an age of the Church more experienced and more spiritual? As Professor Smith says, "If we lose an imaginary autobiography of one Old Testament saint, we gain in its place something far truer and far richer in religious lessons, a lively image of the experience of the Old Testament Church set forth by the mouth of many witnesses and extending through the vicissitudes of a long history. There is nothing in this change to impoverish the devotional use of the Psalms; for even a life like David's is a small thing compared with the life of a whole nation, and of such a nation as Israel." Nor in the transference of the bulk of the Law from Moses to very much later dates is there anything subversive of orthodox Christianity. Professor Smith proves the sincerity and *bona fides* of the later Jews in their ascription to Moses of so much that only owed its far-away origin to him; and he succeeds in showing, what is indeed self-evident, that the new theory of the Law is consistent both with Christ's

testimony to it and Paul's dogmatic use of it in his epistles. One of the most interesting passages of the lectures is where Professor Smith expounds how Paul's ascription of temporariness to the discipline of the Law is better illustrated by placing the Law, as the new criticism does, after the Prophets, and not before them. But Professor Smith's services to positive Christianity go further. The view of Old Testament religion which he expounds is that of a gradual growth away from the general body of Semitic religion, from which it borrows so many of its institutions and tempers. Now the objection which has been taken to this view by the conservative school is that it robs the Old Testament of the character of revelation and minimises its unique service to mankind. But Professor Smith—than whom we have no scholar better equipped in the field of general Semitic research—traces the development of the religion of Israel only to prove its uniqueness and to emphasise its authenticity as a divine revelation. That God revealed His nature and will to Israel as he did to no other nation before Christ; that this revelation separated them in life and worship from their kindred tribes; that prophecy is no mere return to natural ethics, but is a body of positive truth discovered for mankind by the real intercourse of the prophets with God—are facts emphasised by Professor Smith over and over again. How deep his conviction goes, how far he applies it, may be seen from his definite discrimination between the Scriptures and the Apocrypha, to the latter of which he denies the religious originality which he finds in the former—always, of course, excluding Chronicles.

It is these contributions to positive religion which lend to Professor Smith's lectures their originality and permanent value. Perhaps some day the Church, as a whole, will become aware of the immense service to her which he performed, who, at a time when the dominant methods of criticism were employed, in the service either of a scholarship indifferent to religion or of a dogma that denied the supernatural in history, turned these methods first to the discrimination of what was true and spiritual from what was false and cumbersome in the creed of the Church about Scripture, and then established the Bible more securely than ever in a position of eminence above all other literature, and proved in it a character explicable only by the admission of a divine revelation.

PROFESSOR MIDDLETON ON ILLUMINATED MSS.

Illuminated Manuscripts in Classical and Mediæval Times, their Art and their Technique. By J. Henry Middleton, Slade Professor, etc. Cambridge: University Press.

A Slade Professor of Mr. Middleton's taste and accomplishments cannot fail to write well and instructively on illuminations or any other branch of art. The chief drawback to his treatment of his subject in a literary point of view is a certain want of continuity. The book abounds with passages of the highest interest, but instead of being fused into a fluid and luminous current of descriptive writing, the text bristles with short paragraphs, like thorny spinifex, ominous of a dry soil. If, however, the book is rather one for reference than for reading, this is no fault of the author's, who is himself the victim of the mechanical and commercial spirit he deplores as the bane of our epoch. The plates are the original, the text but the accompaniment. No man was more competent than Professor Middleton to have selected his illustrations for himself, but this has been forbidden by the necessity for producing a cheap book. All the illustrations save one have already done duty in the work of Woltmann and Woermann, and much of the present volume, instead of a vital outgrowth, is a clothed skeleton.

Professor Middleton, however, cannot help manifesting originality. Two special features in his labours deserve special recognition, his insistence upon the essential continuity of pictorial art, modified rather than metamorphosed in the course of ages; and his attention to the accessory departments of writing materials, calligraphy, print, and binding, whose intimate connection is clearly apprehended by him. We question his grounds for depriving King Eumenes of the credit of the invention of parchment. The skins on which the ancient Greeks wrote, whatever the process of their preparation, must have been rude and coarse material in comparison with vellum, which had too many advantages over papyrus to have been forgotten when once known. We imagine, too, that Professor Middleton is mistaken in ascribing the introduction of papyrus into Sicily to the Arabs; seeming to recollect, though we cannot now verify, a statement by an ancient writer that it dates there from the time of the Ptolemies. The Arabs certainly cultivated it, as appears from the testimony of a mediæval Arab geographer that the produce of a great marsh (now drained) near Palermo was appropriated in the first instance to provide the Sultan with writing-paper, and that the surplus went to make cordage for the navy. One evident error Mr. Middleton falls into is the statement that the recently discovered MS. of Aristotle's Constitution of Athens has accounts written on the back, "not many years later than the date of the original treatise," meaning, of course, of the copy. The fact is just the reverse; the accounts were written first, and the MS. is on the back.

These, however, are trifles. Professor Middleton's æsthetic views are more important, and may easily fail to gain the assent of his readers from the insuperable difficulty of placing the evidence fairly before them. His preference for the illuminations of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries over their successors of Renaissance times will be shared by none who judge solely by his own illustrations, and note the vast advance of the later artists in freedom and accuracy of draughtsmanship. But these plates omit the all-important element of colour, and, as colour is the soul, and form but the body, of the illuminator's art, we are disposed to agree with Professor Middleton that the best colourist is the best illuminator. We do not call him the best artist; the conditions which condemn the illuminator's craft to comparative inferiority are thus clearly stated by Professor Middleton himself:—"The monastic bigotry, which prohibited study either of the living model or of the beauties of classical sculpture, tended to foster a strongly conventional element in art, which for certain decorative purposes was of the highest possible value." The decay of monastic bigotry, then, as well as the invention of printing, tended to destroy miniature painting in manuscripts; and, greatly as we may admire this beautiful art, and ardently as we may wish that practitioners like Miss Bertha Patmore may never be wanting to stand between it and utter extinction, we must admit that the world has gained by the exchange.

FICTION.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. By A. Conan Doyle. London: George Newnes, Limited.

The Great Shadow. By A. Conan Doyle. "Arrowsmith's Annual," Christmas, 1892.

A Phantom from the East. By Pierre Loti. Translated by J. E. Gordon. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

Mr. Conan Doyle gives us here two samples of his varied and brilliant work. To our mind the quality of the little shilling story he has written for the series which began with "Called Back" is infinitely higher than that of the larger volume containing the adventures of the inimitable Sherlock Holmes. But every man to his taste. It is not everybody who regards "Micah Clarke" as one of the best pieces of historic fiction in the English language, and the people who failed to appreciate that masterpiece will probably find something very much more to their liking in Mr. Doyle's detective stories. Nor can we blame them for doing so. As detective stories, those

in "Sherlock Holmes" strike us as being in the very first rank of their class. Mr. Doyle, we believe, once knew in the flesh a being who possessed that instinctive insight into the real meaning of appearances with which he has so liberally endowed Mr. Sherlock Holmes. The acquaintanceship must surely have been rather uncanny. Even the most innocent man in the world, with a conscience void of any offence greater than that of having grumbled over his breakfast, might shrink from the scrutiny of eyes which discovered everything and missed nothing. Happily Mr. Doyle has survived the ordeal, and has lived to tell us a whole series of stories of love and adventure, of crime and cunning, in each of which there is a central mystery. It is in the unfolding of this mystery that Mr. Doyle shows us that France is not the only country which can produce a Gaboriau. And then Mr. Doyle, unlike Gaboriau, is never tedious. He does not prolong the agonies either of his readers or of the victims of the plots it is his business to unravel. The result is a volume which may be safely commended to all who like sensational stories of the best class, ingenious in plot, graceful in narration, and absorbing in interest. "The Great Shadow" belongs, as we have said, to another class. We have heard of a disappointed reader who, having bought the booklet in the expectation of finding in it a story of the "Called Back" order, wrote angrily to complain of having been duped. "The Great Shadow" is something better than a story of crime or clever mechanical skill in picking the lock of a secret. It is a delightful historical novelette of the year 1815, in which a love-story, rather unsatisfactory in its character, is intertwined with the events that culminated in "that world's earthquake, Waterloo." Mr. Doyle tells the story of Waterloo as it was seen by one who took part in the fight, and the story is as lifelike, vivid, and stirring, as anything he has yet written. If only for this description of the historic scene, "The Great Shadow" will be treasured by the admirers of the author; but there are many other things in the little story to make it worthy of notice, and to give it a high place in Mr. Doyle's writings.

What is the secret of Pierre Loti? There is but the faintest touch of genius about the ingenuous writer, and yet he can always enthral a reader and ensure his sympathy. Those innocent—or, at all events, seemingly innocent—revelations of the writer's innermost mind, which he delights to make, have an indescribable fascination for ordinary mortals. Everybody has his own romance, but there are not many who care to dress out that romance for the edification and amusement of the outside world. Pierre Loti has no scruples on this point. He throws wide the door, and admits the stranger to the very innermost sanctuary, taking him, as it were, to his heart and pouring out to him those confidences which most people reserve either for their nearest and dearest friends or for the sacred pages of a diary. "A Phantom from the East" is the latest example of the author's quality. It has all his faults—faults which occasionally make the masculine reader anxious to have a personal interview with the author, in order that he may forcibly impress upon him something of the contempt which fills his soul as he reads his sentimental outpourings—but it has also all his more brilliant qualities—the vivid scene-painting, the exquisite delineation of character, the thousand and one touches by means of which this writer differentiates his confessions from those of ordinary scribblers. The story he has to tell is commonplace enough—he has cast it in the form of a sequel to one of his earlier works. Loti remembers his Aziyadé, the love of his early days, whom he had wooed and won and thrown off in his customary fashion during a sojourn at Constantinople ten long years ago. He recalls her, and a sudden impulse seizes him to learn what has become of the beautiful child who had been his lover and companion for a few weeks at a stretch. When once an impulse seizes a man of Loti's temperament it tyrannises over his whole being until it is gratified. He had not even troubled to inquire about the fate of the "beloved object" for years, and yet when something occurs to bring her image vividly before his eyes he cannot rest until he has made the long journey to Constantinople in order to learn whether she be still in the land of the living, and if not, to spend a sentimental hour of remorse at her grave. There is no plot in the little story, not even the faintest attempt at one. The journey to Constantinople is taken, and the story of it is full of the misery which this delightful soul is suffering from the pangs of a somewhat tardy remorse, though there is an interlude which lets the world into the secret of the fact that Pierre Loti has once been a guest beneath the roof of the queen who is known to the reading world as Carmen Sylva. Arrived at Constantinople, Loti pursues his inquiries into the fate of his deserted mistress. Old servants are sought out, only to be tracked to their graves, and again and again the way seems blocked. But at last perseverance and a well-filled purse bring their reward, and he is brought face to face with the old negress who can tell him the secret of Aziyadé's fate. It is commonplace enough, and tragical enough. The girl whom he had left to her fate ten years before had not long survived his desertion. Done to death in the cold recesses of a harem whose sanctity she had violated, she has long ago been sleeping quietly beneath the cypresses of an Eastern burying-ground. Loti's mission is accomplished when he has found her grave and treated it according to his fashion. "And when I have found it, the little mound where lies Aziyadé, I fasten my horse to the branches of a cypress tree and alone I approach it, and fling myself upon the earth—upon the reddish earth, damp with mist, where a few frail plants grow. From the position of the mound I know how the beloved body beneath must lie, and having looked all around to make sure no one is there to see me, I lie down gently and kiss the earth above the place where the dead face must be." The kiss of course brings him great comfort—let us hope that it always does in such cases—and Loti goes back to Paris to be disturbed no more by any thought of the poor phantom of the East which had once disturbed his rest. It is almost brutal to give in bald prose the outline of a story like this—one might as well dissect a butterfly. Yet despite its mawkish sentiment and overcharged sentimentality, the tale has the grace and beauty which Loti seems to be able to impart to most of his creations; and in this case, at all events, the French original has been admirably rendered into English.

SOME CHILDREN'S STORY-BOOKS.

Finn and His Companions. By Standish O'Grady. Illustrated by J. B. Yeats. ("Children's Library.") Fisher Unwin.

The Green Fairy Book. Edited by Andrew Lang. Illustrations by G. H. J. Ford. Longmans.

Indian Fairy Tales. Selected and Edited by Joseph Jacobs. Illustrated by M. I. Batten. David Nutt.

Fairy Tales from the Far East. Adapted from the Birth-Stories of Buddha. By Theo. Gift. Illustrations by O. von Glein. Lawrence & Bullen.

The Great Show of Kobol-Land. By Frank R. Stockton. Illustrated. Osgood.

Brownies and Roseleaves. By Roma White. Illustrations by L. Leslie Brooke. Innes.

The Feather. By Ford Madox Hueffer. Frontispiece by F. Madox Brown. ("Children's Library.") Fisher Unwin.

Fairy Tales in other Lands. By Julia Goddard. Illustrated. Cassell.

Bimbi: Stories for Children. By Ouida. A New Edition. Illustrations by E. H. Garrett. Chatto & Windus.

Stories. By Ascott R. Hope. A. & C. Black.

Here is a goodly variety of juvenile literature—an advance argosy of the Christmas season. More of the kind will doubtless follow; it will very likely prove one of the most notable seasons for children's books for years. The fact is impressive, especially when taken in connection with another fact—namely, that most of the writers of

children's books just now are persons who, as the author of one of the books under notice says of himself, take their vocation seriously. What is the significance of the phenomenon? Are parents too, in this very improved age, taking their vocation more seriously?—for the prevalence of all these books written for children implies the prevalence of parents who purvey them. Or is all this output of fairy tales and children's songs in print but a feeble response to the ancient and inevitable craving, asserting itself again, of the human fancy for an escape into the marvellous—but the pallid substitute of the nineteenth century for the tales our grandmothers used to tell with the living voice, and that nurses' lore of song and story which is not included in the certificate of the modern nursery-governess? These might be interesting speculations to pursue, but our business here is only with the volumes that suggest them.

The batch presents rather an embarrassment of choice, for most of the books are good in their various ways; yet one does not hesitate long in making a first selection of Mr. Standish O'Grady's "Finn and His Companions." This is the most original and the best entitled to the name of literature of the lot. It brings quite a fresh and novel (though, for that matter, old enough) element into the literary atmosphere of the hour, and grown-ups of taste will find as much to charm them in it as the young folk. It is a setting in singularly fitting language—simple, poetical, and dignified—of some of the less-known Ossianic legends of Ireland—those which St. Patrick is supposed to have heard from Caelta, Ossian's cousin. These are, therefore, though they deal very often with the marvellous, by no means fairy tales, but bardic traditions, forming a fragment of a continuous cycle centring around certain national heroes, akin to the Scandinavian sagas. They are concerned with brave and wonderful adventures, knightly deeds, and noble and generous virtues. Healthier provender for the youthful mind it would be hard to name. Mr. O'Grady does not fail to point out, moreover, to his young readers the historical function of these stories, in illustrating, by their glimpses of character, sentiment, and environment, the sort of men those Picts and Scots were who did for Romanised Britain what the Goths and Huns did for the Roman Empire elsewhere.

The appearance of a "Green Fairy Book" from Mr. Andrew Lang—after his "Blue Fairy Book" and his "Red Fairy Book"—is one of the most convincing symptoms of the new passion for the old stories. Mr. Lang himself, both by critical precept and book-making example, has done as much as anyone to promote this renaissance of the fairy tale. It is a good sign that he is encouraged to go on, and even asked for more. He has in this volume put together a fresh collection from the old sources: from Mme. d'Aulnoy, the Count de Caylus, the Grimms, and the folk-lore of various quarters. It is, we think, a better collection than the "Red Fairy Book," and Mr. Ford's numerous illustrations are both more interesting and more carefully thought-out and executed than any we have yet seen from him in these volumes.

A very charming book is Mr. Joseph Jacobs's "Indian Fairy Tales," which is uniform with his "English Fairy Tales" and "Celtic Fairy Tales." India is the home of the fairy tale The oldest fairy tales, fables, and drolls of the world come from there, and many of those which have been familiar in other countries and at various epochs, there is little doubt, have had their origin in that nursery of the race. Mr. Jacobs has excluded from his collection stories which are familiar to us under other guises, and those which he gives are therefore practically unknown except to the scientific folk-lorist. They are all good, and some of them, like "Punchkin" and the "Princess Labam," very fine stories indeed. There is a scientific air about this collection (which does not in the least interfere with its interest as a story-book), for Mr. Jacobs is both learned and zealous in this lore. One of its features is an Indian parallel for Uncle Remus's famous episode of Br'er Rabbit and the Tar Baby; it is in the form of a tale of a "Demon with Matted Hair," from the Birth-tales of Buddha. The volume is admirably illustrated by Mr. Batten.

"Fairy Tales from the Far East" go over the same ground as Mr. Jacobs's collection: they are compiled from Indian stories with the aid of Professor Rhys Davids's translations. Only they are less literal and scientific in form than Mr. Jacobs's, and constructed more expressly with an eye to nursery requirements. The authoress has freely expanded and embellished the stories she has chosen, without, however, departing very much from the main lines of the originals. It is a matter of taste whether this is a desirable process. Some stories may be improved by it, and we think there are one or two here, where the original is a very bald narrative, which the expansion renders at least more intelligible and attractive to juvenile readers.

"The Great Show of Kobol-land," by Frank R. Stockton; "Brownies and Roseleaves," by Roma White; and "The Feather," by Ford Madox Hueffer, are attempts of original writers to make fairy stories out of whole cloth. Mr. Stockton's book is conceived in a spirit of sprightly humour which goes well with an extravagant fancy, and results in a very amusing little story: it is a single story in several chapters. He contrives to enforce a politico-economical moral by means of the discovery by a Kobol-land statesman of a certain "Cosmic Bean" which will grow food for an entire population, and do away with the need to work. Mr. Stockton, being an American, thinks work a blessing, and consequently he makes his wise young prince on coming to the throne abolish the Cosmic Bean. Miss Roma White's vein of fairy sentiment is that which personifies Nature in a sort of edifying pantheism adapted for little children; thus, flowers are naughty and are put to bed by elves, and caterpillars flirt with green-flies, and blackbirds compose sonnets, and robins propose to violets, and the brownies think the match unsuitable and break off the engagement. But though this may sound a bit silly at times, there is a tenderness and beauty about the writer's fancy which sometimes recalls Charles Kingsley; and it moves always among hedgerows and tree-trunks, and lovely spots of the field and wayside, which perhaps it is well thus to innocently people for innocent minds. It is a book which can only have a refining influence upon children who enjoy it. "The Feather" is, like Mr. Stockton's, a story in several chapters; but it is not so successful. There is not much fun in it; and though the adventures are extravagant enough, the Cockneyism of the dialogue handicaps them heavily.

"Fairy Tales in Other Lands" is an attempt to find variants for old favourites amid foreign surroundings—to give us, for example, "A Chinese Beauty and the Beast," "A Scandinavian Jack the Giant-Killer," "An Egyptian Puss in Boots," "A Japanese Red Riding Hood," and so on. The little book is a pretty one, and, we suppose, will gratify the eternal desire for novelty in some way. "Bimbi" is a new edition of "Ouida's" well-known stories for children. These are not fairy stories, but they are nearly as good, and they are all distinguished by that originality, sometimes *bizarre*, but always hinting of genius, which is the mark of Ouida's work.

We have left one of the best volumes of the batch to the last; this is "Stories," by Ascott R. Hope—stories of schoolboy life, in which the writer seeks, he tells us, "naturalistic effects." He seeks these effects with such success and with such humour that this is altogether one of the most remarkable books of the kind we have ever met. The humour is so good, the naturalism so true, and the style so vigorous, that the adult reader can enjoy it as heartily as the fortunate schoolboy into whose hands it may fall.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

Mark Pattison, more than thirty years ago, urged his friend Mr. Reynolds, of Brasenose College, Oxford, to set about the preparation of an edition of Selden's "Table Talk," and added some valuable hints as to the way in which a work of the kind ought to be done. It is superfluous to say that the late rector of Lincoln was a scholar of critical instincts and fastidious tastes; but though he was not usually given to enthusiasm, he was never tired of extolling John Selden as a typical Englishman—a man of large ideas and few prejudices. Selden was born in the reign of Elizabeth; studied the classics at Oxford and the law in the Temple; was a Member of Parliament when Charles I. was wrangling with the representatives of the people; built up a great reputation as a jurist, historian, and scholar; and died, at threescore years and ten, under the Commonwealth. He was a brave, outspoken man, a dull but learned writer, a thorn in the side of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and too ardent and uncompromising a lover of political liberty to find favour with the Stuarts. The first edition of the "Table Talk" was published by a former secretary, who deemed it wise to keep his master's aphorisms in ambush until Charles II. and James II. had given place to a better man in the person of William III. The book appeared in 1689, and Richard Milward, the secretary in question, dedicated it to Justice Hale, and took the opportunity to say that its contents were the outcome of twenty years' intercourse. Dr. Johnson asserted that Selden's "Table Talk" was the best book of its kind in existence, and Coleridge was the first, but not the last, to exclaim, "Oh, to have been with Selden over his glass of wine!" If the spirit of Erasmus was in the man, his conversation had much in common with that of Luther, and thinkers have always admitted that it contains weighty bullion in the shape of sterling common-sense. Mr. Reynolds has justified in this choice, scholarly, and altogether admirable edition of the "Table-Talk" his thirty years' delay over the task which Mark Pattison was good enough to propose to him when they were both young men. We at least of this generation have at all events no reason to quarrel with its leisurely fulfilment.

It was not until the middle of the present century that anyone arose with the necessary technical knowledge and sufficient enthusiasm to do justice to the life and labours of England's first printer, William Caxton. But for the accurate knowledge of bibliography as well as of the rise and development of the art of typography which the late Mr. William Blades possessed, we should probably have been as much in the dark about Caxton and his printing-press as were the men of many previous generations. Mr. Blades was born in London in 1824, and at the age of sixteen entered the office of his father, the well-known printer of Abchurch Lane. All his life he was a hard-worked business man, and his remarkable and learned book on Caxton was the outcome of his scanty leisure. The Caxton Exhibition of 1877, which was held to celebrate the fourth century of the introduction of printing into England, was due to William Blades more than to any other man; and under his management it assumed proportions which made it a centre of attraction to scholars in all parts of the world. Encouraged by the reception which was given to his researches on Caxton and early English printed books, Mr. Blades published other bibliographical works, some appealing to specialists, but others of a more popular kind. He died suddenly in the spring of 1890, and only a few days before the proposed celebration of his jubilee as a printer. William Blades was all his life a "book-lover," and therefore it is well that another volume from his pen should now appear in a series which bears that name. "Books in Chains" is worthy of a place side by side with the same author's "Enemies of Books." It is written in a genial, modest fashion, and is full of learning, and from its pages it is possible to discover the exact whereabouts of all the old chained books which still remain in the cathedrals and parish churches of England. There are other bibliographical papers in the volume of hardly less interest, notably one on "Early Schools of Typography," which bring out the curious knowledge acquired by Mr. Blades in the course of his patient and laborious investigations.

There is a Russian proverb which says, "Don't blame the looking-glass when your own face is at fault," and Nikolai Gogol placed the words as a motto on the title-page of his comedy, *The Inspector-General*. The play—it is one which has had a considerable vogue in Russia—has just been translated by Mr. Arthur A. Sykes, who has written an introduction and added a few critical notes. Nikolai Gogol, who was born in the same year as Lord Tennyson and Mr. Gladstone, was at one time a Professor of History at the University of St. Petersburg; but he soon grew tired of lecturing, and abandoned the work at the end of two or three years. He died, unmarried, as far back as 1852, at the early age of forty-three. He was a shy, awkward, silent, and erratic man, and, like Laurence Oliphant, in his closing years he became a mystic. *The Inspector-General* was written when Gogol was twenty-seven, and his more celebrated book, "Dead Souls," when he was thirty-three, and both are now regarded as Russian classics. Unluckily Gogol, who became a confirmed hypochondriac in his closing days, flung the manuscript of the second part of "Dead Souls" into the fire, in a fit of depression, so that the work only exists now in an incomplete form, printed from a rough draft found amongst his papers after his death. The central incident of the comedy is the sudden advent of a supposed "Revizór" in a country town in the South of Russia. This functionary, declares Mr. Sykes, has no exact English analogue, but he may be defined as an inspector, commissioned by the Government, with unlimited powers to inquire into the abuses of provincial administration. The arrival of this petty autocrat gives Gogol an opportunity, which he turns to good account, of holding up to ridicule and contempt the black sheep of provincial Muscovite society. As a picture of provincial life in Russia, and the petty tyranny which too often pervades it, Gogol's droll comedy, with its dramatic surprises and biting satire, deserves to be studied.

Apparently the world is awakening, in the sense it never did in the author's life-time, to the genius of Richard Jefferies. Mr. Walter Besant—who is quoted as a literary oracle in thousands of middle-class homes—has probably a good deal to do with this result, for his "Eulogy" justifies its title, and is a book which assuredly does not err on the side of lack of charity. Anyhow, whatever the reason may be, the fugitive contributions to magazine literature which the author of "The Gamekeeper at Home" wrote are being brought out in handsome and permanent form. We are not quite sure of the wisdom of such wholesale reproduction in cold blood of what we fear was often hurried work, nor are we at all sure that Richard Jefferies himself—who was a judge of good writing and the reverse—would not have prayed to be delivered from the unbridled zeal of his friends. The book which has suggested these remarks is entitled "The Toilers of the Field," but we are bound to say that, so far as we have been able to discover, there is nothing specially fresh or strong about it. It describes once more the agricultural labourer's daily lot; it is rich in manly sympathy with the oppressed, and occasionally there are subtle touches of poetry concerning Nature and human nature in its realistic and sometimes imaginative pages. At the same time there is little in the book which we have not heard before, and heard better, and heard from Richard Jefferies.

"The Student's Chemistry" is a good school-book which is over-weighted by its own title. We naturally expect when we take up a volume with so ambitious a name much more than Mr. Taylor has provided in these lucid, well-arranged, but not otherwise remarkable pages. Doubtless such a volume—the outcome, we believe, of considerable experience in the work of practical teaching—will prove extremely useful to schoolboys who have been well grounded in the rudiments of the science, but learners of a more advanced type are hardly likely to take Mr. Taylor's manual as their guide—at all events, when they reach the more difficult branches of investigation. The questions and problems which are given throughout the book are admirable, and they cannot fail to be of service in testing how much or how little the pupil has assimilated. The greater part of the book consists of expanded lecture notes, which give in outline the principal facts with regard to the more important elements and their compounds; whilst the last hundred pages deal with chemical physics and chemical philosophy, and discuss the theories which have arisen around them. The book contains a full index and many excellent scientific illustrations and diagrams.

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* The Table-Talk of John Selden. Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by Samuel Harvey Reynolds, M.A. Oxford: The Clarendon Press. Demy 8vo. (8s. 6d.)

Books in Chains, and Other Bibliographical Papers. By the late William Blades, author of "The Life and Typography of Caxton," etc. ("The Book Lover's Library.") London: Elliot Stock. 12mo.

The Inspector-General; or, "Revizór." A Russian Comedy. By Nikolai V. Gogol. Translated from the original, with Introduction and Notes, by Arthur A. Sykes. Portrait. London: Walter Scott. 12mo. (3s. 6d.)

The Toilers of the Field. By Richard Jefferies, author of "The Gamekeeper at Home," etc. Portrait. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co. Crown 8vo. (6s.)

The Student's Chemistry: being Outlines of Inorganic Chemistry and Chemical Philosophy. By R. L. Taylor, F.I.C., F.C.S., author of "Chemistry for Beginners," etc. Diagrams. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co. Crown 8vo. (5s.)

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